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No. 143.

ONLY A CARRIER-BOY.

BY JOHNNIE DARR.

"Only a carrier!" That was all;
And the fair one sweetly smiled,
As she uttered the sentence, bitter as gall,
To a heart that with love was wild.
Nothing to her, in her haughty pride:
He was to her—a toy;
For she was to be a rich man's bride,
And he—was a carrier-boy!
Oh, lady, look back! In thy hour of need,
When thy heart with fear was cold,
When the icy waters closed o'er thy head,
And the carrier-boy so bold—
Sprung out in the water, dark and deep,
From the vessel's lofty side,
And brought your dripping form to the deck—
Where then was all your pride?

You said you loved him, but alone,
And his heart was filled with joy,
But now your glances are hard and cold—
He's only a carrier-boy!

'Tis over now, and the maid so proud
Is a leader of fashion's throng,
And the carrier-boy has won a name
That lives in speech and song.
He feels content. Ah, blessed gift,
That her heart can be so enjoyed,
For oft in her gayest moods she sighs,
As she thinks of the carrier-boy!

Iron and Gold:

OR,

THE NIGHT-HAWKS OF ST. LOUIS.

BY A. P. MORRIS, JR.,

AUTHOR OF "FLAMING TALISMAN," "BLACK CRES-
CENT," "ROCKWINKER," "HERULES," "THE
HUNCHBACK," "PEARL OF PEARLS,"
"THE RED SCORPION," ETC.

CHAPTER I.

THE HIDDEN JEWEL.

"Nor thankless glooms obtrude, nor cares annoy,
Whilst the sweet theme is universal joy."
—BLOOMFIELD.

"'Tis well to wake the theme of love
When chords of wild ecstatic fire
Fling from the harp, and ample prove
The soul as joyous as the lyre."
—COOK.

A SMOOTH road wound amid the trees—a
highway noisy with the constant rumble of
farmers' wagons, bearing their truck to the
distant market.

Beyond the echoing hum that rises from
the thoroughfares of a prosperous city, a
narrow lane diverged from this main road—
entering a dense avenue of foliage, where
cool airs and pleasant perfumes broke the
drowsy influence of the warm spring day.

Following the lane, we bring the reader's
imagination to a cottage nestled amid a
picture of green and flowers—a home that
was humble, though rich in the love that
lived beneath its roof.

It was a poised Paradise, where odors of
bloom, and fairest of dreams wove their
charms, in nameless number, within the
senses of the beholder.

The hour was eight o'clock, A. M.

A gray-haired man sat on a low bench
near the vine-clad porch; and at his feet,
with one arm resting on his knee, was a
beautiful girl. She was busy making up a
bouquet of roses culled from the beds that
surrounded the cottage, and singing lowly
to herself at the same time.

Nineteen years of age; not yet perfect
in her loveliness—but more than merely
pretty, and promising to be a woman of
rare symmetry. Eyes of hazel; lips of
sweets; cheeks of blush; hair almost black
and curly; a voice of merriment and sober-
ness alternately—this was Zella Kearn, to
an observer, the gem that was hidden away
from the world, in the snug little cottage
by the country lane.

The man was her father, Wilbur Kearn;
and these two, alone, were the occupants of
the fairy retreat.

He sat there with his head bent forward,
his eyes looking far out through an open-
ing in the trees, resting vacantly on the
scene before him, while his mind was dis-
tressed between absorbing thoughts and a list-
less attention to the song of his child.

Suddenly the music of her voice ceased.
"There!—I've finished it. Look, pa;
isn't it pretty?"

She held up the result of her labors for
his inspection, as she spoke. But turning to
glance into his face, the exclamation died
abruptly, and the gay smile fled.

Wilbur Kearn did not hear her. And a
long silence ensued, while she studied the
aged features unwaveringly.

At last she rose, and wound an arm
around his neck.

"Pa?"

"Eh?—did you speak to me, child?"

Instantly the smile came back to her ripe,
red lips, and the voice was again quick and
girlish.

"Yes, I did. You didn't seem to hear
me. Look! isn't this pretty? What's the
matter, pa? You are pale. Are you sick?"

"I've not been well for several days,
Zella. I—I was thinking—when you spoke to
me."

"Thinking? What about?" rapidly, and
twisting the bouquet as she gave it some
final touches of improvement.

"Oh, nothing."

Zella laughed. "It can't be of much im-
portance, if it's nothing; but I want to
know."

"Do not insist."

"Well, I sha'n't, then," pouting.

"I'm going to town to-day, Zella," he
added.

"Are you? Take me—I want to go, so
bad. I've lots of things to get, pa."

"No, Zella, not this time—the next.
Wait till I go again."



With the stealth of a cat she gained a position behind the foliage, and looked in upon Cyrus Winfield and his son.

"Oh, pshaw! I do think I'm the most
unfortunate girl in the world! Why, I
haven't been to town for a whole month. I
want to see aunt Jane, too. What do you
keep me buried up in this way for? You
must be afraid you'll lose me! And it's a
shame, for I—"

"Tut, tut, Zella, not so fast," he inter-
rupted, as she rattled off the sentences.

"Well, what's the reason, then? I'm
worse off than a bird in a cage, and I don't
like it a bit."

"We have been very happy here, Zella."

"Yes, pa, I know we have," and her
tone softened; "but you act just as if you
were afraid of losing me—you guard me so
close."

A momentary glance darted at her from
his gray eyes; a peculiar expression passed
over his face.

But Zella did not notice it. She was still
fingering at the bouquet, as if it would not
look to please her; the roses were receiv-
ing all the benefit of her gaze; what she
said was half-playful, half in earnest.

"It is for your own good, child," and with
the speech, Kearn arose and entered the
house to prepare for his departure.

A few steps into the hallway, he paused
and looked back, though he could not see
her from where he stood.

"Yes," he uttered, in a low, reflective
voice; "I am afraid of losing you. One so
beautiful as you, my child, must not be
too well known—particularly if they have
a heart like yours. And, though your na-
ture is difficult to read, there might chance
some one to penetrate it; and it would do
you no good—it would do you no good."

His only child was precious to him, and
he did guard her jealously.

When alone, Zella moved toward a bow-
ered seat at one side of the grassy plot.

Suddenly, a half-smothered exclamation
escaped her. She had seen a figure ap-
proaching along the path that led from the
lane to the house—one that she recognized
—and, in a second, she changed the direc-
tion of her steps.

But she did not wish to elude the com-
er; for, while he drew near, she knelt at a rose-

bush—though it really needed not another
bud to complete the bouquet.

A young man emerged from the shade of
the gravelled path—then halted to con-
template her; for the picture seemed to him
like the apparition of a floral nymph.

Then he advanced and touched her gently
on the shoulder.

"Ough!—Mr. Winfield!" There was a re-
coil accompanying the simulation of sur-
prise; but, in the same breath, she con-
tinued, as she sprung to her feet:

"You must be trying to frighten me to
death! Why did you come up so stealth-
ily? See my pretty flowers—do you want
them?"

"I am wild to possess them, since they
were arranged by your hands—"

"Oh, don't go wild!" with a rippling,
merry laugh. "Here—I gathered them for
you."

"For me?"

"Didn't I say so? Come, let us go up to
the house. Pa is going to the city. So,
consider yourself my prisoner till he gets
back!" and she wheeled about and started
toward the porch.

"I would esteem it a great favor if you
held me in captivity forever."

"You might get tired!" laughingly.

"No danger. I always feel so happy in
your society, that I look forward with
eagerness to each visit I intend making
you."

"Do you? I am glad to hear it. Sit
down. You haven't been to see us in two
weeks—"

"It has not been for lack of desire, I
assure you—"

"Are you going now, pa?" to her father,
who just then came out.

"Yes—ah! you have company. Hope
you are well to-day, Mr. Winfield."

The two men exchanged cordial salu-
tations, and, after a few remarks of no
particular import, Kearn started off.

For a long time, Winfield sat conversing
with the merry girl—she doing most of the
talking. It was a pleasure to be silent and
listen to her endless utterances; though he
wondered how she could find so much to

employ the tongue, for she mingled very
little with the outside world, nor was she
fond of reading. Her powers seemed to be
a natural gift.

"You talk so fast, I can hardly catch
your words," he interrupted, as she poured
out a multitude of sentences that all ran
together, with hardly space for punctua-
tion.

"Ha! ha! ha! do I? Then you must
listen fast."

"When will you be a sober woman,
Zella?"

"I'm sure I don't know—never, I guess.
I think I'll always be a girl," and again the
red lips laughed aloud.

"I prophesy that you will never marry,
unless you cease to be a girl."

"Oh, my! How unkind. Ha! ha! ha! but
I guess you are right. To tell the truth,
I know I shall never marry any one."

"You won't?"

"No."

"Why?"

"Oh, well—because," with the laugh again.

"Then I never shall."

"You won't? Why?" and she looked at
him keenly.

He had spoken without thought.

"I can hardly answer that," he said.
"Perhaps it is for the same reason you have
given: 'because.'"

Hugh Winfield was a young man of about
twenty-four years; a blonde; and by nature
sincere—though not entirely free from self-
ishness. At the time our narrative begins,
he was studying law.

His acquaintance with Wilbur Kearn and
Zella was not of long standing; yet in the
few months that had elapsed since their
first meeting, he had experienced a peculiar
admiration of her—not exactly love, and
still, a feeling very similar.

His visits to the cottage were not frequent,
but they were periodical; and each time he
bade Zella good-by, to return to his mental
labors in the city, he felt an increase of the
fascination that had crept upon him.

On this day, he remained with her until
the sun was low in the west. Ere he part-
ed, and while he held her hand, he said:

"Zella, before I go, I want a kiss—"

"Mr. Winfield!" She drew back, and
the dark eyes widened.

But he held her tightly.

"Come, Zella—just one."

"No, Mr. Winfield—no!"

"Yes!" while he drew the resisting form
closer.

"No! no! no!"

But the kiss was won, though she shrunk
from him, trembling.

He did not dream, then, what that kiss
was to cost.

As he walked away along the lane, he
was thinking deeply.

"Do I love this girl?" he asked himself,
more than once. "What makes me feel
thus toward her? Not a word, not a look
has ever been given, to tell me that she loves
me—yet she is drawing my heart irresistibly
toward her, until I am almost ready to fall
on my knees before her! I would have her
with me always; but it seems as if I dare
not ask her to be mine. There are other
women far better educated than she—wo-
men, too, whose bosoms are passionate with
love, while Zella is cold, either by force or
will, or actual deadness to the keener emo-
tions of the heart. A merry, careless girl,
I love, and do not love. Where is a name
for such a state?"

At a sort of tavern, or restaurant, about a
mile from Kearn's dwelling, Winfield had
stalled his horse; and, soon procuring the
animal, he rode off, still thinking of Zella,
and his own indefinable condition of mind.

Zella had gazed after his retreating form
till the trees screened him from sight. Her
face—merry, smiling and unreadable all the
afternoon—now was very solemn, and the
hazel eyes were softer than usual in their
gaze, as they followed after Hugh Winfield.

But, when the young man disappeared,
there was a toss of the head, which threw
the curls over her shoulders, and she step-
ped upon the porch, pausing here to look
once more down the path, as if expecting to
catch another glimpse of him, and then
entered the house to set the table for the
evening meal.

"I think he might have waited for tea,
anyhow!" she exclaimed, as her deft hands
spread the snowy cloth.

CHAPTER II.

SHALL HE DO IT?

"For I have wandered far and felt the might
Of southern loveliness and northern wit.
But every charm at length has taken flight,
And at a vision's feet again I sit."
—TUCKERMAN.

"One face was ever in my sight,
One voice was ever in my ear."
—LANDON.

NIGHT was closing fast on St. Louis.
In the immediate neighborhood of Lucas
Place, stood the commodious residence of
Cyrus Winfield, a merchant of considerable
wealth and high standing in the communi-
ty.

The father of Hugh Winfield sat in his
luxurious parlor, in dressing-gown and slip-
pers, enjoying his usual rest after a day of
activity in the business walks of life; and
Mrs. Winfield, a mild, low-voiced, meek-look-
ing lady, was occupied with meditation, for
her eyes rested steadfastly on the carpet,
and a thoughtful expression dwelt in her
face.

The two were alone.

Cyrus was a man of fifty odd years,
strongly built, and of rather stern-cast
countenance. His eyes could flash and his
voice growl—or, he could be gentle as a
child; so said, at least, those who knew
him most intimately.

Hugh was the only living child of the
pair; death had darkened his house thrice
in a few short years.

Neither had spoken for a long space; and
he was regarding his wife with an unturn-
ing gaze.

"Anna—you must stop this thinking."

She started and glanced up.

"It will only harass your mind," he
added, "and can accrue no benefit. Now,
stop it, I say."

"I can not help it, Cyrus," said the mild
voice, and the tones of the speaker were sad.
"But you must help it. What good will
it do?"

"Perhaps none; but, Cyrus, I know that
Hugh will never consent to this plan—it
will touch too keenly on his pride. Con-
sider: he is our only son; if he makes the
sacrifice, it will result in much unhappiness
to him. How can I be otherwise than
miserable, when I foresee so much trouble
in the future?"

"You forget the trouble of the present."

"No, I do not, Cyrus; thoughts on both
those subjects are torturing me."

"You say you know that Hugh will not
consent? How do you know?"

"I have already told you: his pride.
This girl is not the proper mate for him—
you know she is not, Cyrus."

"Pah!"

"He can not love her—"

"Pah, again! Love?—it's all nonsense.
There's money in the match; and we must
have money."

"Money will not insure happiness in
marriage."

"It ought to. Marriage without money is
foolishness—it is downright nonsense—"

"You did not think that way when we
married, Cyrus," she interrupted, reproving-
ly.

"True, Anna—true. But the 'situa-
tion' is the thing now; we must have
money, or the ship will sink."

"And would you sacrifice the soul of
one of that ship's crew, in order to save
your own life?"

He bit his nether lip and moved nervously.

"Let us quit this. Necessity is a trying state—ah!" He paused as a footstep sounded in the hall.

In another moment, Hugh Winfield entered.

Mrs. Winfield withdrew.

"Ah, Hugh!"

"Well, father?"

"You've just come in?"

"Yes, I was going up-stairs, but a servant told me that you wished to see me."

"So I do—so I do. Sit down. I want to talk with you. You went out on horse-back this morning."

"I paid a visit to Mr. Kearn," drawing up a chair before his father, and seating himself.

Winfield frowned slightly; but his brow cleared in a second.

"You go there pretty often of late, it seems to me. Take care, Hugh, take care. I have seen Zella Kearn, and she is just the girl to trap the affections of a young man."

"Trap, father!" and he flushed at the word.

"Pah! it's all nonsense. Keep away from her. I've another rose for you to cull."

Hugh looked at him keenly.

"Speak on, father; what is it you have to say?"

After a brief silence, Cyrus Winfield gazed full in his son's face, and said, while he delivered each word in a measured accent:

"Hugh, I am on the verge of total ruin."

"What?"

The exclamation was one of amazement.

Cyrus repeated.

"What do you mean? Explain!" cried Hugh.

"I mean just what I say. My last available funds were drawn to day. My real estate is tied up so that it is worth nothing to me. Business has failed me; money has slipped through my fingers, as if each dollar was an evil. Cyrus Winfield, to-day, this minute, is not worth ten thousand dollars."

"And to what does this prelude tend?" asked the young man, while he stared, for he saw that there was something behind his father's significant speeches.

"You can save me."

"I?"

"Yes. If you will be the son to me, now, that you have been in the past, I shall survive the storm—if you will not, then our family will sink from its place in society, and the name of Winfield, so proud, so exalted, will sputter out like a wetted candle."

"Be plain, father; I don't understand you."

"You have heard of Ilde Wyn?"

"I have," with an increase of the wonder that was painted in his face.

"You know that she is worth half a million?"

"I do," promptly. "And the questions are: Who is this Ilde Wyn? Where and how did she acquire her wealth?"

"No matter about that—she has it. Money is money, without regard to its possessor."

"Still, I do not understand what you are aiming at."

Cyrus shifted his position uneasily.

"I made bold to call upon this young lady yesterday."

"Father!"

"Hold, now. I know that neither her money nor her beauty have sufficed to obtain for her the *entree* to our better circles; and this is simply because it has been rumored that she is nobody's child—that she was seen, ten years ago, begging on the streets. True—if the last rumor be correct—she gained her wealth with questionable suddenness. But, you must remember, this is all rumor—only rumor. I say I have seen her. She received me politely. She is an affable, intelligent girl, full of life and vigor; and—and, Hugh, from inferences drawn while in her company, I am candid when I declare that I believe she is a victim to foul slander, and unmerited abuse. Moreover, I think she will make a reasonably good wife."

"Father!—father!" and the quick-breathed exclamations appeared to come chokingly, "you want me to marry her?"

"Never!"

"Hugh!" Cyrus Winfield frowned, and his eyes kindled.

"Father, I can not!"

"But, think, for a moment, of the alternative; loss of all that is so dear to us, deprivation of those associations that have become so necessary to our existence."

"There is no gain in the remedy," protested Hugh. "We will be barred from society as she is, if she becomes a member of our family."

"Not at all. With the money this match will bring us, we can leave St. Louis, and begin life anew. I tell you—and he closed his teeth forcibly—the last available funds I possess are, this moment, in the large desk in my office-library. When this is spent, I do not know how we shall live. Will you save me?"

"This is terrible!—terrible!"

Hugh Winfield started from his chair, and paced excitedly to and fro.

Cyrus watched the changeable workings of his features, as if to read what would be the reply. And the light in his eyes was stern and eager by turns; for his inward senses were fluctuating between hope and despair.

"You speak as though I had but to ask, to get her?" said the young man, questioningly, as he paused short in his walk up and down.

"And I do not speak idly. She has had opportunity for sight of you, when you did not know it; she has listened to many of your conversations, when you would not have dreamed she was near—"

"Then she must be a witch!"

"I did not ask her to explain the 'how's.' I have ascertained that she loves you."

"Loves me?"

"She told me as much."

"Ilde Wyn is not very maidenly. She must have been exceedingly entertaining, that such an intimacy should exist in so short a time between you and her, and the comments were tinged with a sneer."

"We can overlook that. Come, Hugh, be just to us—all—avert the blow that is imminent. Win this lovely girl, and get hold of her purse-strings. Will you do it?"

"I will not answer you now."

With the blunt reply that came even huskily from his lips, Hugh Winfield strode from the parlor.

The old gentleman gazed after him; and when the last echoes of his step had died out in the entry above, Cyrus muttered to himself: "He is a strong-willed boy. Now, both he and his mother, I feel, think I am anxious for the consummation of this marriage, for reasons beyond the perils from my debts. It is not so. Ilde Wyn is not the one for him; I would not have him wed her if she was the only woman in the world. But, money!—money! I must have money! And if he refuse me this aid, he shall repent!"

As he finished his mutterings, his eyes sparkled and his brow knit scowlingly.

A veranda opened, at the further side of the parlor, into a well-cultivated garden.

About the veranda were arranged a number of plants—some of them of a dense growth, as well as gaudy bloom. And, amid the screening foliage a pair of eyes were watching Cyrus Winfield, as he stood there, musing aloud, and unconscious of the surveillance.

Hugh went straightway to his room, and threw himself into a chair by the window, where he sat gazing vacantly up at the starlit sky, and pondering on what had been proposed to him.

Never were his thoughts so full of Zella Kearn as now. Try all he would, he could not escape the imaginary presence of her dark, laughing eyes—and her merry voice seemed ringing unceasingly in his ears.

How could he play the hypocrite, and utter a tale of love for Ilde Wyn? Yet, could he see that father, who had so tenderly guarded him from the cradle to manhood, sink to ruin, when his salvation lay in a single act of a dutiful son?

The air was very close. Hardly a breath stirred on that side of the house. He left his bedchamber, and sought the office library, where a cool breeze rustled the curtains at the long, antique-looking windows.

The apartment was dark and spectral; only the dim light of the stars struggled to break the shadows about him.

He drew an ottoman to one of the windows, and, seating himself there, gazed dreamily out upon the garden.

An unbroken stillness prevailed in his surrounding; soon he was oblivious to all else but his reveries on the entanglements of the hour.

The minutes multiplied; the night advanced, unheeded by the solitary occupant of the library.

Suddenly, a figure glided across his vision; this one quickly followed by another. Two forms had scaled the garden wall, and were moving stealthily toward the house.

Half aroused, yet not entirely free from the listless spell that held him, he strained his eyes to watch the apparitions, though he sat silent and immovable.

And, at that moment:

Toll!—toll!—toll!—began to strike a near clock—the hour of eleven.

Time had, indeed, passed rapidly, since the dreamer came there.

CHAPTER III.

BEGGAR AND MASTER.

"Oh, that torment should not be confined to the body's wounds and sores, With maladies innumerable In head, heart, breast, and reins; But must secret passage find To the inmost mind."

—MILTON.

"Ah me! alas, pain, pain ever, forever."

—SHELLEY.

WILBUR KEARN, after leaving his horse, stepped briskly along the road in the direction of the city, St. Louis.

As he passed the roadside "Relay," where Hugh Winfield had stalled his horse, the proprietor, and one or two loiterers, who were gathered in conversation on the porch, greeted him with a friendly nod.

He was well known thereabouts as a man of education—one who, rumor said, had once been well situated in the world's comforts; and many wondered why he had sought so deserted a place to live in, when it was evident that his proper sphere lay in the heart of an active mercantile community.

But, gossip and inquiry had failed to set forth anything definite regarding him; and the voluntary hermit of the cottage retreat was, therefore, a mystery in the neighborhood.

He walked a goodly distance—finally entering an omnibus that brought him to the Fifth street line of cars. Taking a car, he proceeded into the busy thoroughfares.

When next we see him, he is near the corner of Biddle and — streets, standing before a dusty-looking, gloomy-fronted dwelling, a portion of which was devoted to a confectionery shop of uninviting dinginess.

Over a side door, which gave ingress to the upper stories of the building, a transom contained, in letters of faded gilt, the sign:

DR. ONNORRANN.

Kearn paused for a few moments, and looked up at the lettered transom. His face was pale, and an involuntary frown wrinkled on his forehead. But the frown disappeared almost instantly, and, instead, there followed an expression of pain and sadness, while his gaze fell, and he bowed his head as a man will who is suddenly burdened with weighty thoughts.

He quickly roused himself, however, and advanced to the door.

Entering a narrow, damp-aired passage-way, he continued up a flight of stairs that were dimly lighted by a half-closed window at their head.

To the right of the first landing was a door, and on this door Kearn knocked sharply.

"O-m-e," drawled a sleepy voice on the inside.

The visitor entered.

The apartment was high-ceilinged and square; book-cases, filled with medical volumes, were arranged along the whole of one side; two broad windows, without curtains, admitted an unpleasant glare of sunlight; on the floor was a dirty matting; a few chairs, with worn seats, and a dirty sofa, stood carelessly prominent. In one corner was a round table, containing decanter and wine-glasses; on the walls, in profuse number, were drawings of arms, limbs, hands, feet, lungs, hearts, skeletons, and other anatomical diagrams. From an immense chandelier hung a wire, and on the wire was suspended a grinning skull, that turned slowly round and round.

A large desk, in the center of the room, was piled with books, and numerous cases of surgical instruments; and at the desk sat Theophilus Onnorann, M. D., whose office we have endeavored to describe.

He was rather tall, rather slim—his legs almost fleshless, his arms long and thin in proportion to his body. His head was small—with a sparse growth of red hair, a receding forehead, long ears, sunken eyes, hollow cheeks, pointed chin, hooked nose; and over the latter he wore a pair of green spectacles.

At sight of the corner he dropped the book he had been reading, and slipped, cello-like, from his seat.

"Ah! friend Kearn—you? Come in. I am delighted. You haven't called to see me for some time. Unusual. How do you do?"

His voice was affable; he smiled blandly.

"I suppose you are delighted to see me," said Kearn, with a slight bitterness, as he accepted the chair that was pushed toward him.

"Of course I am," went on Onnorann; adding, significantly: "though I know you'd come again. I've been expecting you, every day, for a week—you manage to come periodically, you know. I was just reading a treatise on Iodoform. It's a good joke! one hundred pills for stomach neuralgia! Kill or cure, or both—I—"

He ceased, and looked into the face of his visitor, who, he saw, was regarding him steadily; and Kearn was frowning as he had frowned before entering the house.

The father of Zella Kearn was there for no idle purpose. His eyes bent keenly on the man of medicine; and Onnorann was not at ease under the gaze, for he whisked himself over to the wine table, and brought it forward to a position between them.

"Take some wine, friend Kearn. It's fine old stuff—good, I warrant. Try it," settling himself comfortably, pouring two glasses full, and beginning to sip the beverage with a marked appreciation.

But Kearn declined.

"Doctor Onnorann, you know what I am here for."

The eyes behind the spectacles looked at him in a peculiar way; then they fell again to the glass, and their owner said, carelessly:

"Well, yes, I believe I do. It's the same old begging story, eh?"

"Relent?" He raised his glass to the light, and smiled, unceasingly, as he surveyed its sparkling contents.

"You have tortured me long enough," continued Kearn. "Tell me, now, what I want to know. Where—where is my child? Surely, your hate must be satiated by this time."

The wine-glass descended slowly to the table; the physician's eyes fixed piercingly on him.

"Wilbur Kearn," said the low voice, in a tone of strange seriousness, "you know the conditions upon which I will be merciful. You know—for I have told you plainly—that only on these conditions will I do it. I have sworn to it. You have sworn to me, now, at regular intervals, year after year, with the same begging, begging, begging. I tell you, sir, it is useless. Do as I dictate, or you will die without learning my secret. My secret?—ah! ha! ha! I forgot. I do not know it myself. But, I have in my power the one who *does* know; and she will never tell until I bid her."

At the close of Onnorann's speech, Kearn started up, and pressed his hands hard to his temples.

"You are a devil!" he articulated, chokingly.

"Am I?" was the calm, inquiring return.

"I say you are a very devil! For years you have seen me suffer all that man could bear! You are without feeling—you have no mercy! See me!—a weak, miserable frame, twice aged in years and woe! Will you not show pity?—pity!"

"Pity is a good thing—but it must be tempered with philosophy. Though it does me no especial good to see you in this state, it would do me no more good to see you better—unless, by the improvement, you agreed to my demand. The remedy for your ailment is in your own hands. Will you use it?"

Take me up-stairs. Let me see this woman once more!" Kearn cried.

"What good will it do?" demurred Onnorann. "You have seen her often enough."

"Just once more!" pleaded Kearn, nervously.

"And when you find, as I tell you you will, that it is a mere waste of breath, do you think you'll accede to my wishes?"

"I promise nothing. But, take me to her—just once more—just once!"

A strong excitement was working in the breast of the speaker; he clasped his hands beseechingly as he pleaded the favor.

The physician appeared to be debating inwardly for several seconds.

Presently, he sounded a bell that was on the table before him, and the summons was answered by a young mulatto girl.

"Remain here until I return. Lock the door, and admit no one," he ordered; adding: "Come, now, we'll go up-stairs. I tell you, friend Kearn, you might as well hope to go to heaven on a bird-kite as to get the information you want, until I bid this woman tell you. I have, heretofore, granted you these *seeming* chances, only to add to your misery. I knew you might question her till your tongue was sore, in vain. I will not conceal that fact. But, I am growing tired of it. This is the last time—mind, I say it is the last—"

"Come—come!" interrupted Kearn, brokenly.

They ascended to the third story, and paused before a thick, sumner-seal door.

"Hark!" admonished Onnorann.

They heard a low, weird, nasal voice coming from the apartment beyond the door, rising in one of those peculiar melodies that enliven the soul at a camp-meeting of colored people.

"Hear her. That's the way she spends most of her time. But, she's contented in her captivity, for the poor blind thing couldn't live if I were to cast her out."

"Let us speak to her—let us speak to her!" Kearn's voice was strangely husky, as he drew closer to the physician and uttered the quick words.

Onnorann stepped to the door, and opened a small slide in one of the top panels, saying, as he did so:

"It's no use, I tell you. Comply with my conditions, friend Kearn, or the secret dies when the life of that shriveled form goes out. Look: do you think she will live long?"

(To be continued.)

"FRISKING THE TILL" is the name of an art practiced by London boy thieves. It consists in creeping on hands and knees behind a shop counter and robbing the money drawer.

THE BETTER WORLD.

BY SALLIE EVANS.

There's a better world than *this*, my friend, Bright better world above,

Where hosts angelic, deathless blend Their rays of light and love;

Not light, like day's dull rays below, That comes anon, then dims and dies;

Not love, like sea-tide's ebb and flow, That changes with the hour that flies.

There's a better world than *this*, my friend, Far better world of bliss;

Where joys of joys forever lend Blessings ne'er found in *this*;

Where glows supreme Jehovah's throne, Mid courts more chaste than crystal clear,

And grouped in one celestial zone Rapt saints of ages all appear.

'Tis the life of love, in heaven, my friend, 'Life of the world to come';

Whither poor souls at last shall wend When Christ's sad round is run;

Home to the "Father of Light" and rest! Up from the moldering grave;

Into the mansions of happiness On the other side of the Wave.

Madame Durand's Protégés;

OR,

THE FATEFUL LEGACY.

BY MRS. JENNIE DAVIS BURTON,

AUTHOR OF "STRANGELY DEED," "CROOK'S DECEIT," "ADRIA THE ADOPTED," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXI.

WHOSE HAND STRUCK THE BLOW?

THE stalwart form whose supple strength she had gloried in, lying prone and helpless in the dust; the proud head stricken down, the features set with a pallid gleam as her agonized gaze sought them through the dusk. Oh, the agony of the moment for Mirabel, until her trembling fingers tore open his waistcoat and traced the faint beating of his heart.

"Not dead! Oh, dear Lord, I thank Thee," breathed her grateful heart in silent prayer, as she lifted the dead weight of that helpless head and pillowed it on her loving breast.

A warm, sluggish stream flowed over her hand, and the short, crisp locks of his hair were matted with the ebbing tide.

"Blood," said North, who was kneeling now by her side, in answer to Mirabel's moan of horror. "He must have been thrown against the jagged edge of some one of these rocks. We must find up the wound, and get aid here at once."

"Oh, cruel rock! Oh, poor, poor love!" whispered Mirabel, over the pallid, unresponsive face. And then her finger—quickened by her fear that this silent, ebbing blood was stealing away the chances of a life dearer than her own—fell in softest touches until they found a gaping wound. She tore her dainty little handkerchief into strips and pressed them firmly on the bleeding cut, then with North's and Valere's, strained a thick bandage over it.

"Go now, quickly as you can," she said, turning her face toward the clerk. "I will stay here with him."

Without waiting another word, North dashed away, and Mirabel was left to her sad vigil.

Oh, the agonized suspense of the moments as they dragged away; the mute horror of knowing that the still form might grow rigid in her clasp before help should come. Would the unconscious mind wake to the infinite yearning of her spirit over him, or would it wait away through the mystery of space? Would the closed eyes unveil the mirrored depths of strong, pure love, or were they sealed forever from the intensity of mortal strife for both joy and grief?

But at last came the steady tramp of advancing feet, the flicker and glare of lights, and the subdued voices of men in awed converse. They paused by her side, and put down a rude litter hastily constructed and furnished with soft blankets and downy pillows. Valere, unconscious and motionless as the dead, was lifted upon it, and then willing hands took up the burden, and the little procession went gently and solemnly back to the manse.

Doctor Gaines was there by the time the manse was reached, and at once took the responsibility of all directions.

"Take him straight up to the old madame's room," he ordered. "There are the best arrangements for an invalid's comfort in that. No hysteria nor fainting among you women, there, I say. Get away out of sight and sound if you have no command over yourselves."

This last was addressed to his spinster sister and to Fay, who had hurried out to break into sharp ejaculations of fright and dismay as they saw the deathlike figure. Mirabel, pale and drooping like a blighted flower, and without a word or moan, kept her place by the side of Valere.

He was laid on the great ebony bedstead in madame's room, and at a word of dismissal the bearers went silently away. With one glance at the white, quiet face of Miss Durand, the doctor realized what intolerable suspense would be to her.

"Have you nerve to help me with an examination, Miss Durand?" he asked. "I want you to hold his head entirely firm while I probe that ugly wound."

Mirabel was sick at heart, but there was not a tremor in the white hand which smoothed back the gory locks, while the physician stooped above him with the glitter of some minute instrument under his thumb.

As the wound was fairly disclosed, Doctor Gaines opened his lips, and cast a quick glance of surprise at Mirabel. He did not speak, however, and immediately resumed his task.

All the while the wound was being probed and dressed, the injured man never moved nor uttered a single moan. Only the fluttering movement of the heart told that life lingered in the still frame.

"He is badly stunned, and no wonder, after that blow," said the doctor, in quiet tones. "It is a very dangerous hurt, but not necessarily mortal. I tell you this at once, Miss Durand, for I judge it is better you should know the entire truth. This wound is not the result of an accident."

North, who remained in the room, came forward.

"I beg pardon," said he. "He was thrown from his horse. Was he dragged, do you think? I could find no rock to account for such a clean cut."

"No rock made it," asserted the doctor. "At least it is not the result of his fall. He has been assassinated."

"Assassinated!" echoed North, while Mirabel strained her hands together over her heart with a shuddering cry.

"He has been attacked from behind, and only this single blow struck. I should

think by a club of tough, hard wood. There is a contusion on his forehead where he struck the ground, which is the effect of his fall. Had this blow fallen upon him fairly it must have crushed in his skull; but something—perhaps the swerve of his horse—directed it to the side, leaving the clear cut you have seen."

An appalled silence had fallen on the two listeners, which North broke after a moment.

"Has he been robbed?"

"I don't know yet. I left word for Thancroft when I came from the village; he will know what sum of money the young man was expected to carry. I've made sure that his pocket-book is on his person, but its contents may have been tampered with."

a great surge, swept away his forced composure for a single moment.

"Mirabel, oh! peerless, radiant Mirabel! I am dying for you—I can not live without you. To snatch a perishing soul from the very clutch of the fiends of perdition, tell me that there is still a chance to win that precious love I can not live without."

Her glance rested upon him pityingly.

"I thought you knew my heart is no longer mine to give," she said, with such sweet pride thrilling through her tones as served to rouse all the demon in him.

He spoke never a word. But there came a flash across his perfectly-modeled face which transformed it from almost angelic beauty to fiendish malignity; and the cruel, cold flame that leaped into those paling eyes came with the shock of a sickening revelation to Miss Durand.

That lightning glance which spoke of frenzied love and deadly hate—that, and he had turned from her and strode, with even steps, away.

But Mirabel, shrinking, with a numbing horror turning her blood to ice, clasped her hands over her eyes, and whispered, to herself:

"God forgive me if I judge him wrongly, but I believe his hand struck that murderous blow."

CHAPTER XXII. THE MISSING BRIDE.

VALERE gained but slowly. Time drew itself lingeringly through the sweet summer days, but all too fast was it for the hearts—some that were happy, and some that were heavy—in Fairview Glen.

Drake prospered but poorly in his search for the woman who should restore the true heir of the Durands. He came once or twice to report, and to consult with Mr. Thancroft.

"If it weren't out of all reason," said he, "I'd think she knew my purpose, and was keeping out of the way because of it. I can't find a track that she hasn't doubled on, nor a time she hasn't been close enough to keep watch on Fairview, if she had any object in it. I'm as likely to come across her at last by staying close here to the village as by chasing her about like a will-o'-the-wisp."

Nevertheless, he did not give up the search, for the very inconsistencies which baffled him challenged him on to the task.

And the weeks rolling around brought very close the time when Milly Ross should be brought to trial.

North had been at work with all the energy which desperation will lend. Through his endeavors the best of counsel had been secured in the defense, the facts as they stood had been sifted through and through, in the remote hope that some loop-hole of escape would present itself, but things were looking darkly for poor Milly Ross.

The clerk made his appearance at the manse one day, and asking for Miss Durand, was ushered above to the private sitting-room, where she and Fay were passing the morning together.

Mirabel had been in to brighten the day for the convalescent, but he evinced feverish symptoms; so, fearing a relapse, she had given him a sleeping powder prepared for such emergency, and withdrew, lest her presence should chase sleep from the bright but hollow eyes.

Fay had recovered her accustomed degree of careless spirits. The fear that the shadow of Madame Durand's death might reflect upon either herself or Ware, was dissipated in the light of the evidence which told so strongly against the maid; she wasted no sympathy upon the latter when her own selfish alarm died out. Moreover, she was inspired now with the hope that she was not still loving all in vain.

Lucian had met her on a few occasions when she walked in the grounds remote from the manse. He came there no more after the day when his soul had unvalued itself to the clear gaze of Mirabel. And though he spoke no words of love, the simulation of tenderness, which no man could better assume for a purpose, his slightly subdued manner and quiet persistency satisfied Miss St. Orme that her charms were gradually winning him back from his unreciprocated passion for Mirabel.

And so she was content to wait, having much faith in her own powers, but more, if it must be confessed, in the efficiency of the thirty thousand dollars which would become hers when Mirabel wedded Erne Valere.

The clerk was ushered into the presence of the two young ladies, and sat cross in his haggardness and anxiety. Mirabel welcomed him most cordially; she liked the open, honest spirit of the obscure young man, and her womanly sympathy could reach down to a pitying contemplation of the deep sorrow which oppressed him.

"I've come on a mission from Milly, Miss Durand; one that she charged me with that night when Mr. Valere was attacked, and his danger put every other thought out of my head for the time. She says that when she put away the jewels after Madame's death, the key broke as she turned the lock of the last casket. She left orders down at the village for another one; I was to bring it to you and see that it answered. I hope that my neglect hasn't been any inconvenience."

"None to me, North. You know my intention to give up possession of the jewels?"

"They'll find none more fit to wear them," said North, in respectful admiration. "If you'll be so kind as to try the key, I'll know whether any alterations will need to be made on it."

Mirabel crossed the room and brought the caskets, one at a time, placing them on the little dark solid table. She took the key, but it worked stiffly in the lock.

"It will need some fling off at the edge," said North, but with his stronger hand overcame the resistance, and the lids of the jewel-boxes sprang back, one by one.

Fay, with a cry of delight, fluttered about the glittering contents.

"Oh, the magnificent darlings! The great, sparkling, brilliant, the lustrous pearls; the glowing, fiery rubies; amethysts, turquoises, emeralds, opals, all here. How can you think of giving them up, Miss Durand?"

Mirabel smiled silently as she passed her fair, unjeweled hand through the glittering heap. She took up the ring, which was circled around with alternate amethysts and pearls.

"It is very unique," she said, turning it slowly. "Remember Ross' saying she could not find the spring to replace it in its golden shield."

"Ugh!" shuddered Fay. "Madame had

it on her hand after she was dead. It suggests graves and ghasts; I'd never wear that if the jewels belonged to me. Ah, it has just come to me! That ring is a match-piece to the necklace about the painted throat of Madame Rosalie Durand."

"The lost necklace! Yes, it certainly is," said Mirabel, without attaching any importance to the fact.

North leaned toward her, and his hand shook as he extended it.

"Will you permit me, Miss Durand? Are not the pearls a little discolored?—and look! there is one loose in the setting."

He turned the ring round and round with a grave, disquieted face.

"Loose?—so it is. And the sharp tracery is fretting it. I wish it could be remedied at once, but I do not like to trust it in the hands of the village workmen," said Mirabel.

The grave doubt upon North's face cleared a little.

"If you'll trust it to me, Miss Durand; I shall leave for Philadelphia this evening. I'm going on business relating to—to—the trial." The poor fellow's voice choked and trembled. "I'll be glad to undertake the commission for you, and it will give me something else to think about."

"And I am glad of the opportunity," said Mirabel, smilingly, though her heart ached for him.

Shortly after North took his leave, but more than once on his way down the mountain path he paused to assure himself of the safety of the ring.

"It seems like a wild hope," he whispered to himself, on one of these occasions. "A wild, desperate hope—I dare hardly think of it as such. But, God help me! it is the only one that is left."

And while the clerk pursued his way, Valere awoke from the sleep which had not refreshed him. Mirabel was at his side and remained with him through all the afternoon, but the unfavorable symptoms did not abate. Thoroughly alarmed at last, she dispatched a messenger for Doctor Gaines, and imposed utter quiet in the sick-room.

"I could be satisfied to sit here and look at you forever," said Erne, with feeble, loving enthusiasm, but a grave, doubtful shade stole into his eyes as he spoke. "I must disobey your command, nevertheless. Queen Mirabel, I must speak of the thoughts which are troubling me. I am not mending fast, my love; and suppose—suppose a relapse should come—suppose I should not get well again?"

"Oh, Erne!"

"It has been troubling me—this thought. We may be neglecting that which is sacredly our duty, Mirabel. We may defer making restitution until it is too late. No need of that speaking more plainly. She knew that he was oppressed by the shadow which had hovered so near to him, and she had heard it said, between the executors of the will, when they did not know she was heading, that should he recover now, he might not escape a second attack upon his life by the unknown assassin."

There was a little silence between them, broken by the doctor's entrance.

"What's this, I want to know?" he asked, with bustling cheerfulness. "What are you doing with this patient of ours, Miss Durand? Haven't I had enough trouble with him, I want to know, without his falling back upon my hands?"

"You can't regret it more than I do, Doctor Gaines."

"You haven't been crossing his whims, or letting him worry?"

"That's just it, doctor," put in the invalid. "She is letting me worry."

"Well, well; that will never do—it'll not answer at all, Miss Durand. Sick people must be humored, you know. Now, my dear young sir, what is it with which you are finding fault?"

"Well, doctor, I want my wife to take care of me."

The doctor pursed his lips into shape to whistle, and stared at his patient with a comical twinkle in his gray, good-humored eyes.

"Ah, poor fellow!" said he, gravely. "Your case is quite beyond my skill, I'm afraid. I think you had better call in the parson."

Mirabel blushed vividly, but her badinage was over. Erne had fairly exhausted himself in his effort to keep up, but now a sudden fainting overtook him.

It was only the natural result of having overtaxed his strength, the doctor explained; and Valere, when revived again, was cautioned to remain very quiet, but he was not yet ready to drop the subject he had agitated.

Mr. Thancroft came in while the quiet consultation was in progress, and added his plea in favor of the young man's wishes.

"You are to marry sooner or later, Miss Durand. Let the little time be in favor of your mutual happiness."

So Mirabel, persuaded most by Erne's pleading glance, yielded to the general solicitation that they two—already one in heart—should be quietly married that same evening.

There was a little pleasant stir throughout the manse when the fact was made known.

Fay heard it with a gush of gratified astonishment. She proffered her assistance in dressing the bride-elect, but Mirabel preferred being left quite alone.

"But I'm so surprised; so overjoyed since I know you're quite reconciled. It does seem like such an unnecessary sacrifice on your part."

Mirabel's eyes flashed, but she said, quietly:

"I am fully satisfied with my choice."

"Oh, of course, Mr. Valere is perfectly splendid. But, dear Miss Durand, do you mean to make over all that money to me? I really can't think of permitting it. Indeed—indeed, I would much rather you would share it with me."

"I do think I got shabby treatment at the madame's hands, but I'd be perfectly satisfied to share equally with you. I can't think of accepting more than half the money and one of the jewel caskets, you darling Mirabel."

And Mirabel, filled with grave, tender thoughts, could not but laugh at the fineness of the little intriguer.

"Not even the least of the Durand gems, Miss St. Orme," said she, decisively. "The money is freely yours, but the jewels are a part of the Durand estates."

And so with the pittance of thirty thousand dollars Fay was fain to be content. But even this little fortune was not sufficient to account for the radiant triumph which illumined her fair face when she shut herself alone in her chamber.

"Mine," she whispered, and she did not think of the money now. "He must be mine after this."

The warning of the strange woman who had met her in the grounds came back to her, but she would not let it disturb her sense of gratification.

"If she marries the other one it will be death to Lucian," the woman had said.

The evening hours came, and in the gloaming, with the red glare of sunset early superseded by mellowed lights from the chandeliers, Valere and Mirabel were made man and wife.

But before the ceremony had taken place, Miss Durand legally transferred her legacy of thirty thousand dollars to Fay St. Orme. She went to Erne, as she had said, a penniless bride; but dearer in her wealth of love and munificence of charms of both person and mind, than if but one of these attractions had been represented by a princess' dowry.

She had changed her mourning robes for a dress of sheer, white, fleecy muslin; and as the evening closed in, Doctor Gaines sent her away for some warmer covering for her thin-clad shoulders.

She slipped her hand from the clasp of her husband, and with a lingering, downward glance at him, eloquent of love and trust. He followed her with his gaze as she left the room, and wondered if this was not all a flitting vision. He could scarcely realize that peerless Mirabel was all his own.

The minutes slipped by; half an hour, an hour passed. The little group in the room of her husband wondered that she came not. A messenger was sent for her, but she did not appear.

There was an interval of waiting in which every one chided himself with unfounded fears; then, thoroughly alarmed by her continued absence, they sought for her through house and grounds.

But Mirabel, the bride of an hour, had vanished mysteriously and completely as though she had been a myth.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 134.)

Mohenesto: OR, Trap, Trigger and Tomahawk.

BY HENRY M. AVERY,
(MAJOR MAX MARTINE.)

XV.—The Traditions of Indian Masons.—The Concluding Ceremony.—The Tau Cross.—The Author receives the Indian degree.—Hole-in-the-day.—The extent of Indian Freemasonry.—Explanations.—Guide for Emigrants.—Indian Signs.—A Fight with the Indians.—Their Beliefs.—Freemasonry.—Lives saved by Freemasonry.—Ed. Carson.

THE indulgent reader will pardon this digression, and we will return to the subject of Indian Masonry. The second act in their ceremonies, or rather the second "section" of their degree, is historical, and the delivery of the traditions of their order consume no less than three hours. I could fill a volume by giving it *verbatim*, in the Indian language, but that would be superfluous, so I will content myself with giving the substance.

The traditions of the tribes, concerning the origin of their order, are, strange to say, all alike among all of the tribes—conclusive evidence that they were all derived from the same source. They claim that after the deluge the Great Spirit sent them a white bear, who led them to the North Star, where they found a most magnificent council-house. The bear led them through a long, winding passage to a room furnished in celestial splendor. At one end of the room was a massive throne, out from a solid block of gold, which, when they entered, was unoccupied; but, after they had taken their seats, the room became instantly darkened, and the intense stillness was broken by a noise resembling the combined peal of a thousand claps of thunder, followed by a crash, and a light so brilliant as to blind them. When they had become accustomed to the light, they beheld the throne now occupied by a strange-looking white man, who wore on the back of his head a long scalp-lock, reaching to the ground, and braided full of gold and precious stones. He was dressed in a robe of spotless white furs, and upon either side of the throne sat two white bears; and the door was guarded by a bear, larger and whiter than the rest.

They represent that the man, speaking in a language which they had never heard, but which, singularly enough, they could readily understand, proceeded to perform the ceremonies which they were then performing.

After placing upon the breast of each the sign or totem of their order, he conducted them to an inner room, more magnificent than the first, where a banquet was spread, surpassing anything they had ever before seen. Here, also, they were waited upon by the white bears, who were the only servants to be seen, and after feasting to their hearts' content, they were taken to the end of the world, where, looking in, they beheld a *paradise*. They could see the forms of loved friends and relatives flitting about in their celestial home within this world of ours, and game of all kinds in abundance. They were then told to return to their own country, and assured, that so long as they preserved the ceremonies among them, they should receive the protection of the Great Spirit in time of war; and that, when others were starving, they should have an abundance. And, finally, he assured them that when they came to die, they should be transported through the portals of the council-room to the paradise they had seen, there to live forever, in peace and plenty.

This is the substance of the tradition concerning the origin of their order. Like all Indian history, it is metaphorical, and exists only in tradition. In their "lecture" to the candidate they are very explicit in giving the most minute details of their journey to the happy land, of their reception there, and of their treatment; also describing how fully the feast of which they participated, and the appearance of the country wherein this magnificent home is located.

The third and concluding ceremony is more impressive than the preceding ones, and occupies no less time than five hours. It seemed to me that they were more than usually explicit in demonstrating the work on the occasion of my first visit; but, subsequent visits merely proved that they were doing their regular work from which not one word was ever taken, or to which one word was ever added, or another substituted. This section consisted in instructing the candidate in the signs, and in administering

the obligation. The duties of one member toward another are manifold, and are impressed upon their minds in a manner precluding the possibility of ever forgetting them. Their own lives are not counted in comparison with their duties, and any of them are ready to sacrifice *all* for the relief of a brother.

The candidate is no longer blindfolded but is obliged to lie upon his back, when, in performed one of the most important of their ceremonies. It consists in imprinting in indelible colors upon the left breast of the candidate, a figure exactly resembling the triple tau or tau cross of a Royal Arch Mason. Every member is provided with a bunch of sharp-pointed fish-bones or needles, which they dip in the indelible fluid, and, in marching around the prostrate brother, each one kneels by his side and makes his mark. The march is continued until the figure is completed, when the new-made brother is allowed to take a seat among the rest. Although their ceremonies are all included in one degree, with but one obligation, yet this degree includes nearly all of the most essential features of the first seven degrees of Masonry, as seen in our lodges and chapters. No record is kept of their proceedings, nor do they have any business to perform except to confer the degree. The chief appoints the time of their next meeting, and they disperse.

Their tradition of a grand council-room in the happy hunting-grounds, is a fair representation of the traditional Masonic Temple, in so much that it is an incentive to nobler and better works. The obligation covers the same ground that those of Freemasonry do; embracing the same duties, and exacting as stringent penalties. Throughout the whole, there runs the same serious reflections, demonstrating the uncertainty of human life, the immutable certainty of death, and the necessity of being prepared for that last great change, which comes to all men, be they red or white, black or yellow. And these teachings are never forgotten even among the carnage and bloody scenes of an Indian war. Their sign will stay the uplifted tomahawk or scalping-knife, and the mention of their word will change the fiercest of savage hate to the love of a brother. They are very zealous in promoting the good of their members, and are also very punctual in their attendance at their stated meetings. At the suggestion of the chief I removed my hunting shirt, and that little band made upon my breast the figure of a Tau cross which I shall bear to my grave. Many times thereafter I was indebted to that mark for my very life.

Among the Perines and Hares of the British Possessions they held their meetings on the night of every full moon; and their annual convocation was held at the time of the "green-corn moon," when every member must be present. I am knowing to the fact that Hole-in-the-day, the once famous chief of the Chippewas, went seven hundred miles on foot to attend the yearly meeting of the Perine "fraternity." It may not be out of place to venture the opinion that very few American Masons would take as much trouble to visit their own lodge as did the chief of the Chippewas. I met Hole-in-the-day at his own home in Minnesota years after that, and he told me that he had not missed a yearly meeting since he became a member of that order. A few days later I received the intelligence that he had met death at the hand of one of his own race. Let us hope that he has entered upon the enjoyment of those pleasures which are the only incentive an Indian can have to become better than his race.

I am asked, "to what extent does this exist?" I am inclined to answer by saying, go and see, but as it would be impossible, and also unpleasant, for many of my readers to do that, I will tell where I have seen it, and where any man will find it if he will only look. It exists among the Perine, Hare and Esquimaux Indians of the far North; the Crees of northern Dakota; the Mandans, Unkaps and Dakota Sioux of the Missouri river; the Black Feet and Brule Sioux of Montana; the Arapahoes and Cheyennes of Colorado; the Kiowas and Comanche Indians of north-western Texas; the Movis, Mojave, and Aztecs of the Rio Gila, and, in a single instance, among the Coyote or Apaches—those Bedouins of Arizona.

The reader must not suppose for a moment that all the Indians of these tribes are members of this association; on the contrary, it is very seldom that any but chiefs belong to the order. Of all the tribes with whom I have ever had any intercourse, I found but three who knew nothing of it. Those three are the Teton Sioux, occupying the country about the head-waters of the Yellowstone river; the Pi Utes or Digger Indians of New Mexico and the desert; and the Crows or Sparrowhawks of the Platte river region. I am informed, with what truth I do not know, that the Seminoles, Creeks, and Choctaws of the Indian Nation are many of them Indian Freemasons. The Teton Sioux, among whom I was long time captive, are without doubt the most brutal and bloodthirsty of all Sioux, and are the only tribe who refuse to make peace with the government.

Upon one occasion, while acting as guide for a party of emigrants from Fort Laramie to Walla-walla, by way of Gilbert's trading-post and the South Pass, I met with an adventure, which, while it illustrates the question at issue, also furnishes an instance of the good effects of Indian Masonry.

The party consisted of nine men, and their families, who were on their way to Oregon in search of homes and fortunes; including myself, there were thirty-seven souls in the train, and upon me devolved the duty of guiding them safely through this Indian country. In these days the Indians along this route were much more troublesome than they have ever been since, and it was no light duty that of the guide through the plains and passes of the Rocky Mountains. Emigrants from the Eastern States, have some peculiar ideas respecting the mountaineers, guides, and trappers; seeming to think that the presence of a guide was a sufficient guarantee for protection. Every guide knows and feels the responsibilities of his position, and that, in a manner, he holds the lives of the whole party in his own hands. Rough and uncouth as we are, we were generally blessed with tender hearts. In the case of this party, they placed the most implicit confidence in my woodcraft, and obeyed orders without inquiring into the wherefore.

About the twelfth day out, or between the Black Hills and Green river, we encamped before sundown upon a level plain of ground convenient to a cool spring, which, bubbling out of the rocks, wander-

ed away and was soon lost in the forest to the north. After the stock had been secured, and the camp-fire lit, I took my rifle and started on a scout. Not far from the camp I discovered "sign," and after tramping around for an hour, returned to the camp. Something in my manner attracted the attention of the company, and they all stopped talking, and waited for me to tell what troubled me. I showed them a piece of tanned moose-hide, which I had found an hour before beside an Indian trail, which was yet fresh, but they could see nothing very strange in that, and asked a flood of questions as to the meaning to be attached to this simple string. I told them we should probably receive a visit during the night, and though I had not seen an Indian, I knew there were plenty of them about, and that the fat cattle of the emigrants would be sufficient inducement to the Indians to make a raid on our party.

So firmly was I convinced of this, that I remained on watch myself, and the night had far spent before any unusual sound broke the stillness. Presently the cry of a whippoorwill was heard, away off to the right, which was answered by one in front, and directly another was heard at the left. To an ordinary observer the notes of the whippoorwill would have signified nothing, yet to me they were pregnant with meaning. I knew that, before the morning sun should shine upon our little camp, somebody would get hurt. It seemed a pity to waken the tired emigrants from the rest they needed for the morrow, but it was better to be prepared, so silently I passed among the wagons, and a touch of the hand awakened each sleeper. Some of them were much alarmed, expecting to feel a scalping-knife at their heads, or dreading a worse fate if captured.

Silently they ranged themselves around the circle, and waited for the enemy to put in an appearance. For nearly an hour we waited and watched, but heard nothing from our enemies. Finally, the dull *toot-toot* of an owl was heard, and I knew that the trying hour was at hand and wondered what would become of the party if I should happen to get "wiped out."

But I had no time to indulge in reverie, for on the Indians came, with a rush, and when they had nearly reached the wagons, gave out one of their shrillest whoops, which was soon changed into a death-yell. The unexpected reception somewhat chilled their bravery, and what were left beat a hasty retreat. I immediately started out to see what had been the effect of our shots, and found, as the result, five Indians, all "past praying for."

I was satisfied that we would not receive another visit that night, and sent the men back to their beds; but their wives and children had received too much of a "scare" to think of sleeping any more at present. With the first dawn of day all hands were out looking at the five poor devils who lay stretched out before us. We left them where they fell, for I knew, from the actions of a drove of wolves who were sneaking about, that they would speedily perform the burial service for them, and we were soon out of the belt of timber in which our camp had been made.

After traveling until noon, we halted for our lunch, and it was while making this halt that I observed an Indian come to the top of a roll in the prairie, and, after looking intently at our party for a few minutes, give the sign of the Indian order, and afterward the first sign in American Masonry. One of the party, a young farmer from Ohio, took his gun, and started toward the Indian. I asked him where he was going. He replied, "To shoot that Indian." "Not much," I said, "unless you shoot me first." He was very much surprised, as were the whole party, but, bidding them remain as they were until I returned, and laying down my rifle, I started for the Indian on the hill, making the sign of a *manito-nitché* as I went. To the astonishment of the emigrants, the Indian immediately laid down his weapons and met me half-way. He was naked to the waist, and I observed upon his breast the tau cross or mark of the Indian order, and unbuttoning my hunting-shirt, I showed him its counterpart upon my own breast. We were friends at once, and, in proof of his brotherly affection, he told me, in the language of a Pawnee Loup, that he was one of the party who had attacked us the night before, and that but three besides himself were left. He told me that his companions had gone for reinforcements, and that, within three days, we would have a large war-party at our heels. Himself and his companion had been left to follow us and keep watch of our movements. He advised me as to the best route to take, and at parting he said, "My brother shall not die."

We embraced, and giving each other the salutation of peace (which is their sign of distress), parted as friends and brothers. But one of our party, beside myself, was a Freemason; and it was not until after many weary days of travel over the sand-hills, through the bitter sage-brush, and we had made the last pass in the mountains, that I told them how near they came to meeting their fate in the mountains of Wyoming.

Let others, be they *Grand Masters*, or what not, think and say what they please, I am certain that the fact of my being a Freemason, was the *only* thing that saved the lives of that party of emigrants.

That famous mountain man, Kit Carson, was an American Mason, and also a member of the Indian order, as he informed me; and to this fact may his great success be attributed, as much as to his superior skill in woodcraft, his daring bravery and cool courage in time of danger, and his untiring perseverance.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 129.)

Winter Rules.—Never go to bed with cold or damp feet. In going into a colder air, keep the mouth resolutely closed, that by compelling the air to pass circuitously through the nose and head, it may become warmed before it reaches the lungs, and thus prevent those shocks and sudden chills which frequently end in pleurisy, pneumonia, and other serious forms of disease. Never sleep with the head in the draft of an open door or window. Let more covering be on the lower limbs than on the body. Have an extra covering within easy reach in case of a sudden and great change of weather during the night. Never stand still a moment after having walked even a short distance. Never ride near an open window of a vehicle for a single half minute, especially if it has been preceded by a walk; valuable lives have been lost, or good health permanently destroyed. Never put on a new boot or shoe for a walk.

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Our Arm-Chair.

Chat.—Winter evenings are close upon us. How delightful can they be made if care is taken to provide the right kind of reading matter. The *Prædicator* says: "The New York SATURDAY JOURNAL is an entertaining and interesting journal as one can get to pass away the long winter evenings with. The paper is filled with lively sketches of adventures, travels, love stories, jokes, etc."

If there is any paper more diversified in its interest or more likely to instruct, interest and amuse the Family Circle than this paper, we do not know where to find it. To the Boys and Girls it is like a chum and well-traveled story-teller; to the grown men and women it is like a Friendly Visitor, always welcome, never dull. We aim especially to reach American homes and firesides, and will esteem it a personal favor if every good friend of the SATURDAY JOURNAL will speak of the paper's merits as he thinks they really are, to his friends and acquaintances.

—Now that a "reform" movement has been inaugurated in New York city, the press begins to spot the rogues and rogues' devices which it is desirable the police should "go for." The *N. Y. Times* thus adverts to the thousand and one swindlers who humbug and cheat the unsuspecting country people:

"The generous-hearted farmers' daughters and innocent bumpkins have, as a result, come in for a large share of attention, and have been robbed of their earnings under all sorts of pretexts. The promise of handsome silk dresses for five dollars has proved irresistible to the young maidens about to become brides; and gold rings and wedding presents of marvelous beauty and extraordinary cheapness, have been equally effective in opening the purses-strings of the intended bridegrooms. New York swindlers, as our country friends have sufficient reason to know, are by no means deficient in a knowledge of the 'state days' of the year. Taking the chances for a good long list of marriages in September and October, they have been vigorously plying the device of offering jewelry and dresses at less than half-price. Young persons on the brink of matrimony are not usually inclined to be suspicious. On the contrary they are imbued with such a delightful trustfulness in human nature that they forward their post-office orders to the sharpers, and wonder if the letters have miscarried, when they receive no replies."

It is amazing, considering how often the people are warned against these "sawdust operators"—as they are known in police parlance—that a sensible person should send money to the sharpers; but, it is a fact, as stated by the *Times*, that at no period of these swindlers' history are they more prosperous than at this present moment. Almost every mail brings us letters asking about this and that "firm"—are they responsible, etc., etc. Of course we can not reply, save generally—to beware of sending money to any unknown person, and, above all, to any scoundrel who advertises to give ten dollars' worth for one. We hope, for the sake of the good name of the city, that the police will hunt these contemptible rogues out; and now suggest that every one who has been victimized shall write to the "Chief of New York Police," giving all the information possible. Only in this way can the vultures be caught.

The Names of the States.—Correspondents frequently ask for the meaning of the names given to many of our States. We have partially answered such queries, several times, but here give a complete list—one well worthy of attention and preservation.

There is, it may be premised, much that is singular as well as interesting in the study of the origin of the names of the States of the Union, as they are derived from a variety of sources. To begin in the geographical order we first have Maine, which takes its name from the province of Maine, in France, and was so called in compliment to the Queen of Charles I., Henrietta, who owned that province. New Hampshire, first called Leominster, from Hampshire, England. Vermont from the Green Mountains (French *vert mont*). Massachusetts from the Indian language, signifying "the country about the great hill." Rhode Island gets its name from the fancied resemblance of the island to that of Rhodes in the ancient Levant. Connecticut's name was Mahagan, spelled originally Quon-eht-tant, signifying "a long river." New York was so named as a compliment to the Duke of York, whose brother, Charles II., granted him that territory. New Jersey was named by one of its original proprietors, Sir George Carteret, after the island of Jersey in the British Channel, of which he was Governor. Pennsylvania, as is generally known, took its name from William Penn, the word "sylvania" meaning woods. Delaware derived its name from Thomas West, Lord De la Ware, Governor of Virginia. Maryland received its name from the Queen of Charles III., Henrietta Marie. Virginia got its name from Queen Elizabeth, the unmarried, or Virgin Queen. The Carolinas were named in honor of Charles II., and Georgia in honor of George II. Florida gets its name from Pasquas de Flores, or "Past of Flowers." Alabama comes from a Greek word signifying, "The Land of Reeds." Mississippi derives its name from that of the great river, and in the Natchez tongue, the Father of Waters. Louisiana was so named in honor of Louis XIV. Arkansas is derived from the Indian word Kansas, "smoky water," with the French prefix of Ark, "a how." Tennessee is an Indian name, meaning, "the river with the big bend." Kentucky also is an Indian name, "Kain-tuckee," signifying "at the head of the river." Ohio, the Shawnee name for "The Beautiful River." Michigan's name was derived from the lake, the Indian name for a fish weir or trap, which the shape of the lake suggested. Indiana's name comes from that

of the Indians. Illinois' name is derived from the Indian word illini, "men," and the French affix, "ois," making it "tribe of men." Wisconsin's name is said to be the Indian one for a wild, rushing channel. Missouri's is also an Indian one for muddy, having reference to the muddiness of the Missouri River. Kansas is the Indian word for smoky water. The derivation of the names of Nebraska and Nevada is not known. Iowa signifies in the Indian language the drowsy ones, and Minnesota, cloudy water. The origin of the name of California is uncertain. Oregon, according to some, comes from Oregans, the Indian name of a wild marjoram, which grows abundantly on the Pacific coast, and, according to others, from Oregon, "the River of the West," an allusion to the Columbia River. West Virginia gets its name from having been formed from the western part of Old Virginia.

It would be a good work for some of our scholars to perform to give us a complete Dictionary of the Indian and peculiar local names of this country. The Indian names and terms especially are so significant that such a Dictionary would be of general use and interest.

KILLING TIME.

I've been thinking how singular it is that there are so many persons dwelling among us who have so little to occupy their minds and attention that they are making the constant inquiry as to the best manner in which they can *kill time*.

Kill time, indeed? They ought to be ashamed to think of such a thing. What! kill the precious moments God has given us to be busy in—murder the hours that should be employed in usefulness? Nothing to do, eh? Then you should immediately find something to do. You wouldn't have to hunt long, take my word for it. Seek out those who have too much to do and endeavor to help them. I'll be bound that, not more than ten rods off, there is some poor woman dragging and slaving her life out, to keep that life within her body, who would be glad if you would run in but for an hour and mend a few stockings, and give her a word of comfort and a bit of small change. This is where you ought to be, instead of idly moping at home and wondering how you can kill time. Surely, you must know of some invalid who is confined to her room, where your presence might make the hours pass less wearily. Do you think, if these invalids were well once more, they would ever desire to be idle? You don't know what it is to be obliged to remain on a sick-bed, day after day—to hear busy life going on all around you, and you not able to share in it. When you are so situated, it will be indeed a good lesson to learn how to bear what others have to endure.

If you are at a loss for occupation, and are unable to do any thing else, go into your garden, pluck the choicest flowers you can find, arrange them in a bouquet and take them to the chamber of some sick friend.

Oh, it seems to me to be wicked, so wicked, when life is so short, that we want the brief moments to pass quicker, or that we want our hands to remain idle a minute, save it to rest them from overfatigue.

EVE LAWLESS.

Foolscap Papers.

My Possible Future Message.

Our country at this illustrious period of its existence, I am glad to say, is as broad as ever it was, and it is a matter of deep regret with me that the Atlantic and Pacific should keep it from growing wider, and I would suggest that both those seas be filled up without further ceremony, and would add that spring chickens brought up by hand are better than the machine-reared.

Our Foreign Relations are perfect; much more so than our near relations, from the fact, I suppose, that distance lends enchantment in that direction and does the clothing in blue herself.

My policy has been always for the cultivation of peace and good-will between nations and also the cultivation of hops in the rural districts; the hop-trees should be grafted upon vigorous poles early, and the hop sold at a good price; otherwise you lose.

I am pleased to notify all that the Tree of Liberty has never been in such a good and thrifty condition as at present. I have taken the pains to lop off the superfluous branches with my ax, and have destroyed many of the insects that prey upon it.

I have instituted large measures of reform in the Civil Service, and have proved that subsoil plowing is a great saving of labor.

The Treasury never was in as good condition as now. Large revenues have poured in to the great national bank, and all the bins are filled. Our foreign commerce has yielded largely, and from all accounts the bean crop has yielded well, also.

The drains upon the Treasury have all been laid with tiles, which I recommend as the most honorable means to drain any thing.

By my policy large benefits have been reaped for our country—they have been reaped with the combined reaper and mower; these painted red being the prettiest.

While everybody loves his country, I verily believe that he who owns several acres of it loves it better than he who owns none of it. I recommend that every man buy a farm. Farms can be bought easily by paying down the price asked and no words; then buy a mule and get a wife; the last can be got very cheap.

During my administration no invading foot has touched upon this hallowed American soil, which is said to be the most productive in the world; the uplands for wheat and the valleys for corn; the loam varying in depth from eight to twenty-six inches, and capable of being made richer by copious applications of bone phosphate well laid on. Invaders please take notice. They will be invariably thrashed with a thrashing-machine, and a million corn-blades will leap from their scabbards to prepare the shocks of war.

I have succeeded in binding the American people together. I have gathered all the little scattered sheaves and bound them into one large sheaf, and have scattered the seed of contentment over the land broadcast, looking back to see that the fowls of the barn-yard have not scratched it up. With careful tending and hoeing I have reason to believe there will be a full crop with but few weeds.

I recommend that every citizen do his best to preserve order and quiet, and make his cider on a Hoe cylinder press.

Let us stand by the Constitution and the

plow, and our shares in the victory will be more than plow-shares, and let your patriotism yield more than two hundred bushels to the acre.

I am in for universal amnesty and a higher price for oats.

I believe that the measures I have adopted for the benefit of our land are true standard measures of four pecks to the bushel, well rounded on top, and the horticultural fruits of my policy will be found to be of the most improved variety.

I have tried the effects of a mild government and find it the best; just as mild weather produces the most beneficial effect upon the early onion crop, and have taken every Abernethy occasion by the horns to turn it to the good of our people.

I recommend that the rail-fences that are built up between the people be done away with, or substituted by the patent-portable fence which is easy to be removed, on notice.

I recommend the enlargement of our navy and early cabbages.

I have been sincerely for Protection, and recommend that burdock leaves be laid over cabbage plants to keep them from the sun, and houses to be built over blossoming fruit-trees to shield them from the frost.

I recommend the building of some new forts on our coast, and milk-houses on every farm; and urge that every citizen keep the Constitution and a cow, for the benefit of himself and his children.

I would like to see the army raised, and likewise more sheep than there are now.

I would not recommend the acquisition of Cuba now, at least until we get the potato-bugs out of what territory we have, and would insist that the Indians be immediately removed on their reservations and the snakes to theirs.

Let everybody put their trust in guano as a fertilizer, and merily swing the hoe.

WASHINGTON WHITEHORN, President.

What to Wear.

THE mystery, at this time, among hundreds of young men is, what is the style for our winter wear? To answer these, and to give some pleasant items of information, we state that the most appropriate and stylish material for a gentleman's suit, to be worn during business hours, is English cassimere, in plaids, stripes, and mixtures, the entire suit being made of the same piece. The coat should be a double-breasted sacque, thirty inches long, moderately curved to fit the form, and left open five or six inches at the bottom of the center back seam. The front has four buttons, three only being used. The sleeves are without cuffs, being made with a vent two and a half inches long, and closed with a single button. Pockets are made with flaps to be worn over, or inside, according to individual fancy. Another suit, equally in favor for business or traveling, is the popular single-breasted, cut-away coat, of blue diagonal, closing one button across the chest, and well cut away in front, showing two or three buttons of the single-breasted vest. Edges bound with silk braids, cuffs finished with a vent, and one button. This coat should be worn with trousers of bluish-gray striped cassimere. Subdued checks and broken, undefined plaids will this season take the place of stripes, which have enjoyed favor so long.

Plaids will be more worn than for several seasons past, and are largely imported in both English and French manufacture, the latter being especially admired. There are, this fall, many unique and desirable patterns in plaids, beautifully blended in weave and coloring, and ranging from the smallest check to a plaid two inches in size. The favorite coat will be the "Prince of Wales," so called from the fact that at a breakfast given by the Prince, all the guests, as well as himself, appeared by request in this style of coat. This coat, which has for the past season or two been worn in London, is now introduced here by many of the leading houses, and bids fair to be the popular coat of the coming season. The approved material for it is diagonal figured elastic coating, or goods adapted for whole suits, such as plain goods, stylish checks, plaids or stripes, in all the fashionable colors, dark-blue, black, or a dark claret color, etc. This style of coat is rather long in the waist, and is closed in front by two buttons in the style of coat. This coat, which has for the past season or two been worn in London, is now introduced here by many of the leading houses, and bids fair to be the popular coat of the coming season. The approved material for it is diagonal figured elastic coating, or goods adapted for whole suits, such as plain goods, stylish checks, plaids or stripes, in all the fashionable colors, dark-blue, black, or a dark claret color, etc. This style of coat is rather long in the waist, and is closed in front by two buttons in the style of coat. 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I

BY ARNOLD ISLER.

I—who am I? Why, myself—Me!
Well, who is Me? Why, myself—I!
Thro' it, I'm getting high
The point, I am! I know this to be
A fact, I am what?
Ah! there it is, I am what? I see,
And still I do not.
Yet I do know I am, 'tis a great treat
To know so much. To know I am a thing,
A living thing, that lives thro' bitter and sweet,
For what? That's it, for what? I talk, I sing,
I feel, I hear, I see, I laugh, I weep;
I love, I hate, I work, I play, I sleep;
And in my sleep I dream. In dreams I see
Strange things, strange scenes, strange faces ap-
pear to me;
I wake, and lo! I find myself where I
Was before I courted sleep. I sigh,
I rise, I eat, I drink, I live, I die!
Then what?
Ah! there it is:
What not? "Cross Death's abyss?
Another life like this?
God forbid!
I would rather forevermore lie hid
In Earth's cold, cold, cold, dead
Than live another life like this, and tread
Again the rough, changing pathway of life,
Brave over again this mixed-up mystic rite.

Was it a Mystery?

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

"EXACTLY, Mr. Heatherstone; you've hit the nail on the head, smack, that time." Farmer Mulberry took his clay pipe from his lips and looked keenly at Rolfe Heatherstone, who was smoking his cigar, with his chair tipped back, and his handsome feet resting on the railing of the piazza.

A sweet, shady place it was, the vine-wreathed piazza of the stone farm-house; and Rolfe Heatherstone, as he sat lazily smoking and gazing off over the whitening fields of buckwheat, to the purple hills that seemed floating in the amethystine air, felt that his fate had dealt very kindly to him in leading him to this charming retreat—and to Violet Tredethlyn.

Particularly Violet Tredethlyn; the queenly girl, who should have been called Regina or Yashti, so royal was her grace, so imperial and rare the wondrous beauty some fairy godmother must surely have given her.

Rolfe Heatherstone was not the first man, by a dozen, who had fallen hotly and helplessly in love with this classic-faced goddess—this stately girl, with her alabaster skin, that never was marred by the slightest tinge of carnation; whose positive colors were the glowing scarlet lips, full and exquisitely rounded; the ebony-black eyes, almond-shaped and lustrous, and their accompanying lashes and brows, that one expecting would be jetty black. But her vividly golden hair, thick and shining, as if some starry sunbeam were imprisoned in it, and golden-brown lashes, lent to Violet Tredethlyn the rare combination of beauty that to Mr. Heatherstone was so attractive.

He was thinking of her, as he sat there; indeed, when was he not thinking of her? And he had just made a remark relative to Miss Tredethlyn—a delicately complimentary remark, such as he knew so well to make—that struck the farmer Mulberry as being peculiarly happy.

Rolfe laughed at the rude, honest reply farmer Mulberry made.
"You see," went on the old man, emphasizing his words by an occasional extra puff at his pipe, "you see, I believe what you say is gospel truth, and that Miss Violy is one of the smartest women I ever see; fact is, Mr. Heatherstone, although you can't see, of course, but she is just a little too cute for me."

Rolfe smiled calmly. Why should this old countryman be a judge of prettier Violet? Then Rolfe wondered what he meant, and he asked:

"Miss Tredethlyn is certainly a remarkably well-read, well-informed woman. I am aware her education embraces pretty nearly all studies women are presumed to be able to conquer; but I must confess I can not imagine why or wherein she is 'cute'—I think you said?"

Farmer Mulberry laid down his pipe, deliberately knocked out the ashes over the railing of the piazza, and then turned to Rolfe, with a quizzical expression on his rugged face.

"Miss Tredethlyn pays her board reg'lar, and don't find no fault with my old woman's cookin'; but for all that, I tell you, Mr. Heatherstone, what I've told nobody—there's something very strange about her."

Rolfe felt his face flushing, but he only coolly begged farmer Mulberry to particularize Miss Tredethlyn's shortcomings.

"I can see you ain't overpleased, Mr. Heatherstone," he continued, half deprecatingly, "and it's nateral enough, seoin' as how you admire her so much. But I do say it don't look right the way she goes on."

Rolfe's patience was beginning to ebb, and now he threw his cigar away in an angry mood.

"I hate mysteries!" he returned, shortly. "I really wish you would tell me—if you have any thing to tell."

"Oh, it's true as Scriptur', for I see it with my own eyes, not an hour ago, too. And if ever there was a—"

"Andrew! will you come here a minute?"

And as farmer Mulberry entered the kitchen, Rolfe Heatherstone plunged away among the dense green foliage of the old-fashioned flower-garden, wondering what on earth the garrulous old man could mean.

"Oh, Mr. Heatherstone! I thought there was no one on the piazza but myself." Violet Tredethlyn's voice was just such a voice as one would have expected from her—clear, sweetly intoned, and slightly ringing. Now, as its music suddenly fell on Rolfe Heatherstone's ears, he actually started in a spring of mingled surprise and delight, for, like herself, he had thought himself alone on the wide, vine-trellised piazza.

He heard the voice, and then caught a glimpse of white drapery, and a narrow scarlet scarf thrown around sloping, queenly shoulders; then, like a vision, her beautiful face dawned on him among the leaves of the Madeira vines.

He knew he loved her; he imagined she loved him; but, somehow or other, farmer Mulberry's words kept intruding upon him, much as he wished to dispel the vague restlessness they occasioned.

What could farmer Mulberry have meant? What was the mystery hinted so mysteriously at? And then Violet suddenly dispersed his thoughts.

"Building air-castles, Mr. Heatherstone?"

and are there any to let? I think I enjoy these chateaux d'Espagne very decidedly, for some purposes."

She was so arch, so free; and Rolfe defiantly put under foot the troublesome wonderings, resolved to enjoy this evening, at all events.

"I am not sure, Miss Violet, that I shall assume the cares of landlord, even for so fair a lessee. Besides, I imagine even the finest castle in Spain would fail to yield me the enjoyment farmer Mulberry's cottage has done this summer."

He was looking earnestly at her, and although she averted her eyes for a second, he noted, with a thrill of delight, the fleeting blush on her cheek. But her answer utterly demolished any hope of his.

"I fully agree with you, Mr. Heatherstone. Such delicious strawberries and cream! and then Mrs. Mulberry's home-made bread! I am quite sure your air-castles could offer no such bill of fare."

Rolfe bit his lip crossly. As if this charming girl did not know what he meant; and knowing, how superbly she ignored. "I referred to a feast rather more æsthetic than bread and butter, and strawberries and cream. But, since you seem not to have partaken of it, I will not mention it again."

He carelessly stuck a spray of the fragrant Madeira bloom in her sunshiny hair, and then walked away as if she had been a marble statue, utterly disregarding of the flash she sent after him from those radiant eyes of hers.

Rolfe passed slowly on by the open parlor window, where Crawford Lance and Miss Spenton were talking. He heard his own name mentioned, and—am I in duty bound to confess this shortcoming of my hero?—very deliberately stopped behind the oleander tree to listen.

"It is patent as daylight to every one else but poor Mr. Heatherstone. If he only had a sister now to tell him; but Miss Tredethlyn will wind him round her finger completely."

So! and Rolfe's ears tingled with anger and shame. It had come to this, had it, that he and this "mystery" of Violet Tredethlyn were canvassed so freely among farmer Mulberry's boarders.

"I wouldn't undertake to say it is all true, Mr. Lance, but the belief is current that Miss Tredethlyn is an opium-eater, and—"

"What else, Rolfe never heard. He fairly staggered away from the window. Was it possible? could it be possible? The cold shivers ran over him as he contemplated the ugly fact. Miss Tredethlyn—Violet, his queenly Violet, his incomparable Violet, the slave of such a tyrant?"

Well, very painful it was to have his sight thus restored to him; but he bore it quite bravely, and only walked his bedroom all night, and then started off in the earliest train before Violet had awakened from her dreams of him.

It was a large, delightful room in the western corner of the big, old-fashioned farm-house that Mrs. Mulberry had given Violet, with four shady windows where the morning glories and California roses twined and bloomed all the long summer days.

This morning, Violet was sitting by her favorite window, looking out on the hills of which she never tired; and wondering away down in her strong loving heart, if it was not Rolfe Heatherstone who had so brightened her life this summer.

Then, the fair, fat face of the farmer's wife peeped in at her door.
"All alone, Miss Violy? No, I can't sit down. I jest dropped in a minute on the way down-stairs. I've been airin' Mr. Heatherstone's room against some one else's wanting it."

"Violet looked up eagerly.
"Why, Mr. Heatherstone's not given up his room?"

"Given it up, paid his bill, and said good-by. Why, didn't you know he was goin'?"

"In spite of the pain she was suffering at this news, Violet could not but detect a peculiarity in Mrs. Mulberry's question."

"Why should I know?" she flashed out.
"Oh! nothing, only—you know I kind o' thought after what Susie Lance said—"

She stopped short, half-appalled by the light in Violet's black eyes.

"And what did Miss Lance say?"

"Mrs. Mulberry was in no way reassured by Violet's tone, but there was in it a command she was powerless to disobey."

"Oh, Miss Violy, I'd rather a bit my stupid tongue before it slipped so! But you mustn't bear no malice to me, Miss Violy, because Miss Lance told me secretly, you know, about your dreadful fallin', and how it must have been that that sent him—"

Violet had never removed her eyes off her face; now, in the same cold, imperial tones she asked another question.

"What dreadful fallin', Mrs. Mulberry?"

"Why—why—ain't it opium they call it? I think it was that Susie Lance said you had in here one day, and it made you so—"

A low, scornful laugh broke from Violet's lips; then she looked wistfully through the window.

"Do you know what Susie Lance has done? She has forged a cruel slander to separate me and him. She has taken an innocent truth and made of it a guilty lie. But it is irreparable—I am too late to undo it."

Mrs. Mulberry wondered what ailed the girl, for, rigid and motionless she suddenly seemed in this moment of distress.

"I am dreadful sorry, Miss Violy! If there's any thing I can do—shall I have Andrew hitch up and drive over to the station after Mr. Heatherstone? The train ain't gone yet."

Violet shook her head.

"No," then she said, more to herself than aloud: "Why should you go for him? I do not know that he cares for me—"

But smiling Fate had arranged the programme admirably; and Rolfe Heatherstone, who discovered he had forgotten a choice picture, and ran from the depot after it, had heard what Violet said, and part of what Mrs. Mulberry said. And to Violet's surprise and the good, garrulous old woman's excessive satisfaction and amazement—in he walked, up to the trembling girl.

"Violet, I will rent you that house on one condition: May I occupy it too?"

"Such a way to pop the question," said Mrs. Mulberry, one day to her husband, later, "but she seemed to understand right away. In our days, Andrew, a man didn't get a house till he'd a wife to put into it."

"But to think what a mischief Susie Lance's tongue liked to 'a made," returned he, thoughtfully.

"Hold yourself too good to do evil."

A Strange Girl:
A NEW ENGLAND LOVE STORY.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN.
AUTHOR OF THE "WOLF DEMON," "OVERLAND KIT," "RED MAZEPPA," "AGE OF SNADES," "HEART OF FIRE," "WITCHES OF NEW YORK," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER X.

THE ASSASSIN.

DEEP in thought, Paxton smoked away. The cool sea breeze gently stirred the locks of hair upon his temples. In the silence of the night he communed with himself.

"What a strange spell this girl has thrown around me," he muttered, removing the cigar from his lips and watching the fragrant smoke as it curled in eddying circles upward. "She is wonderfully beautiful; there is a charm about her that insures me despite myself. I wonder what my father would say if he knew of this fancy of mine for one of the mill-girls? He, with all his pride of his old New England descent. He's a sensible man, though, and I feel sure that if he really knew the girl, he would not object. But, does she love me?"

And long and deeply he pondered over the question, to him of all-absorbing interest. "She will not own that she cares for anything for me, but if I know any thing of women, she does. When she thought that I was offended to-night, she would not let me leave the room until she was satisfied that I was not angry. A young girl is a strange riddle sometimes to us men, and why should they not be, when half the time they puzzle themselves?"

The cigar, burning down unpleasantly near to his fingers, interrupted his reflections. He tossed the stump out of the window, and lighted a fresh one. "I do not feel in the least sleepy," he murmured, as he enjoyed the fragrance of the tobacco. "It is so pleasant that I do not feel like going to bed at all." Then he looked out into the quiet street, with its old and stately elms swaying their leafy tops in the ocean breeze. "How calm and peaceful the night is! Who, on a night like this, alone with the solitude of nature, could believe there was such a thing in this world as strife and toil? That man's angry passions could rage on this fair earth which whispers so woefully of peace and love?"

Crack!
The sound came from the window-pane above his head. In utter astonishment, Sinclair looked up and beheld a bullet hole drilled through the glass of the window.

The truth flashed upon his mind in an instant.
"Some one is shooting at me with an air-gun!" he cried, impulsively, and then over his nature came the animal passion of the chase—the hunt for blood.

Quick as thought he acted; he pulled open the drawer of the little table which stood by his side close to the window, and snatched a little revolver which lay therein; then, with a panther-like bound, he sprang through the window. Hanging by his hands from the window-sill, he dropped lightly to the ground; it was only some fifteen feet, and the soft turf underneath broke the force of the fall.

So rapid had been the action of the young man that the assassin, who had fired the air-gun, concealed behind an elm on the opposite side of the street, had no time after firing the shot to attempt to escape.

Hid by the shadow thrown by the house, and crouching upon his hands and knees low upon the earth, Paxton took a survey. As the shot had passed squarely through the glass, boring only a little round hole, Paxton came at once to the conclusion that the person who had fired the shot must be concealed behind one of the trees on the other side of the street. But to get at him was the puzzle. The middle of the street was as light as day, exposed as it was to the bright rays of the moon, and to attempt to cross it would only give chance for a second shot, which might be fired with better aim than the first.

But if Paxton could not get at the unknown foe, neither could he leave his ambush without danger of discovery, except by retreating through the grounds of the house right behind the tree-trunk which served him for shelter.

Paxton's keen eyes took in the situation at once. The breadth of the street alone separated him from the ambushed foe. He felt sure that he could detect the slightest movement of the unknown if he should attempt to leave the shelter of the tree and escape through the grounds of the house behind him. So Paxton coolly stretched himself out at full length upon the soft turf, and, with his ear to the ground, waited.

Ten—twenty minutes passed away, and no sound save the night wind rustling the leaves of the elms came to Paxton's ears. His brows contracted.

"Can it be possible that he escaped while I was getting out of the window?" he muttered. "If he did, he must be as quick as a cat, whoever he is."

Ten minutes more passed away. Paxton had almost made up his mind that the assassin had indeed escaped, when he heard the slight noise which a man's feet make in moving with caution upon a gravel pathway.

A smile of satisfaction came over Sinclair's face, and he drew back the hammer of the revolver, ready for action.

Then he heard a gate creak on its hinges, the sound denoting that it was being opened slowly and with caution.

The time for action had come. Paxton sprang to his feet and dashed across the road, with the speed of a grayhound.

The man pursued had ears no less quick than he who followed in the chase. He guessed at once that the man whom he had tried to kill was on his track. He now abandoned all caution and rushed forward at headlong speed.

Paxton ran forward at his utmost pace. He reached beneath the tree which had given shelter to the assassin, and came to the gate through which he had passed. It was closed, but the pursuer stayed not to open it; laying his hands upon the gate-post, he vaulted over it, light as a bird.

The sound of the fugitive's footsteps, running at his topmost speed, guided Paxton in his chase.

The unknown ran straight through the grounds to the rear street. Over the fence he went into the street, across the street and into the grounds of one of the houses on the opposite side of the way, then suddenly the noise of his footsteps stopped.

Paxton had followed him hotly, but as he scaled the fence and came down onto the

street, he noticed that the sound of the footsteps had ceased, and guessing that the fugitive again lay in ambush on the other side of the moonlit road, he did not care to cross it in full range of his noiseless weapon.

Quietly he nestled down under the shade of a large elm tree, and waited.
"I can play at hide and seek all night!" he muttered; "but he shall not shake me off, and when the morning light comes then I'll trap my bird."

The fugitive, who had gained the shelter of the fence on the further side of the street, had succeeded in winning one important advantage. He could steal off, his footsteps deadened by the soft garden loam, with much less noise than when forced to tread in the gravel walk.

The breath of the assassin came hard, for the run had been a brother short as it was. Eagerly and intently he listened. Not a sound could he hear except the breeze playing with the leaves, or the distant howl of some wide-awake dog baying the moon and making night hideous with his discordant yelps.

He did not for an instant think, though, that Paxton had given up the chase; he knew him too well for that. He guessed instinctively, that his pursuer lay concealed, waiting for some sign of his presence to again follow on his track.

Cautiously, therefore, he moved away from the shelter of the clump of bushes by the garden fence, beneath which he had found shelter, and stole noiselessly across the garden.

The garden fence was a high one, luckily for him, and thus concealed him from the observation of the watcher on the other side of the street.

A dozen steps had the fugitive taken and not a sound betrayed that his pursuer was on his track. A half-smile came over his face, for he saw safety before him, a dozen more steps and he was half-way across the garden—still no sound of pursuit.

"A narrow shave, but I shall escape," the fugitive muttered, hoarsely.

A dozen more steps and he was within ten feet of the rear house of the grounds; beyond the fence was the open country and that meant safety.

No sound of rapid footsteps in the rear. The fugitive had paused for a moment to rest, when from the porch of the house, with open mouth and savage growls, a good-sized dog came bounding toward him, and hardly had the brute given tongue when the footsteps of the pursuer again rose on the air.

The dog's bark had warned him as to the whereabouts of the fleeing man.

"Get down, you brute!" cried the fugitive, hoarsely, springing to the fence. The dog followed close behind, and emboldened by the flight of the man, sprang savagely at his leg, as he essayed to mount the fence.

The teeth of the dog almost met in the flesh of the fugitive's leg.

Maddened with pain, the man leaped to the ground and dealt the dog a terrible blow upon the head with the heavy walking-stick which he carried with him. With a yelp of pain, the dog retreated, almost stunned by the stroke.

The man again sprang to the fence and leaped over it.

But the contest with the dog had taken time, and when the fugitive had scaled the fence Paxton was not thirty paces behind.

CHAPTER XI.

THE CHASE.

THE open country now lay before the pursued and the pursuer.

First came a long reach of meadow-land, a mile or so in extent, some half a dozen fences across it, beyond that a strip of timber, the commencement of the wood.

That black strip of woodland standing out clear against the moonlit sky was the only hope of the fugitive. Could he only succeed in gaining that, there he might find shelter and hope of escape.

With desperate energy the fugitive ran onward. He felt not the pain coming from the wound in his leg, although the blood had freely followed the teeth of the dog. Fast after him came Paxton.

When half the meadow was past, the fugitive glanced behind him to note the position of his bloodhound-like follower, and he set his teeth together in rage when he saw that Paxton was gaining steadily upon him. Then he looked before him and his heart sunk as he noted how far beyond lay the wood, his only hope of escape.

His breath was coming thick and hard, and the great drops of perspiration stood out like waxen beads upon his forehead. He felt, too, that his strength was failing fast. Another last desperate effort he made to gain ground and shake off the unflagging pursuer. Yawn was the effort, with steady, unflinching strides Paxton gained upon him.

A good quarter of a mile yet lay between the fugitive and the woodland screen. To cover that distance without being overtaken the fleeing man felt was clearly impossible.

Then, with the courage born of desperation, with the same brute instinct which inspires the wolf at bay to turn and fight for his life, the pursued man suddenly halted, wheeled around, and drawing the walking-stick—the air-gun—up, attempted to level it at Paxton.

But the young man was ready, and before the fugitive could level his weapon fairly, he had covered him with his revolver.

The moon's ray glistened along the little barrel pointed full at the breast of the fugitive.

"Drop your hand, Hollis!" cried Paxton, in cool and determined tones, halting, "or I'll put a ball right through you."

A moment, Hollis—for the midnight assassin was the young carpenter—glared at Paxton, and then seeing the folly of resistance, and reading in his eyes that he would surely keep his word, with a hollow groan he dropped the air-gun to the ground.

"Kill me if you like," he said, despairingly.

Paxton approached slowly.
"Hollis, are you mad?" he asked, looking more with pity than with anger upon the man he had hunted down.

"Yes, I s'pose so," the carpenter answered, sullenly.

"You must be to have done what you have to-night. Why should you attempt my life? What have I ever done to you?"

"You've taken away the only woman that I ever cared for," he replied.

"Yes."

"I am not aware that I have taken her yet."

"But you mean to; it's all the same."

"That depends a great deal upon whether she is willing or not."

"Oh, there ain't much doubt about that." "How can you tell that?" Paxton asked quickly.

"I can see it plain enough. I offered myself to her to-night, and she refused me."

"Well?"

"She refused me because she loves you." "Did she tell you that?" and Paxton's heart beat violently as he put the question.

"No; but I know it well enough," Hollis answered, sullenly.

"How do you know it?" Paxton demanded.

"Well, I guess at it from the way she acts. Of course she won't own that she cares any thing for you, but I know she does, and that's the reason why she won't have me."

"Then you think that if I was out of the way that she would listen favorably to your suit?"

"Well, I don't know that exactly," Hollis said, slowly.

"Then why in heaven's name do you put your neck in peril by attempting my life?" Paxton asked. "If by the act you could gain her love, I should not wonder at your attempting it, but since you freely confess that you do not think that it would have that effect, you must be mad to act as you have."

Hollis looked at Paxton for a moment in wonder. The case had never been brought so clearly to his mind before.

"Well, I suppose I am mad," he said slowly, and after quite a long pause. "But I hate you because I think the girl cares for you."

"And, to gratify that hate, you are willing to put your neck in a halter?"

"When a man is mad he doesn't think of such things," Hollis replied.

"Ah!" and Paxton's lip curled. "Now, my friend, just listen to me for a few moments. I am neither an angel or a saint; I have my good and bad points. A man never struck at me yet but what I paid it back with compound interest, if I could. But, the way you are going on, the debt will be so great that I never shall be able to pay it. Now, I don't choose to let it go on. You are either sane or mad; if the latter, then you ought to be in a lunatic asylum. But I have an idea that, even if you are crazy, there is considerable method in your madness. It is rather disagreeable, the reflection that one can not sit down by the window of one's own house and enjoy a cigar after nightfall without hearing a bullet whizzing past his ears. In the future, another mad fit may seize upon you and you may feel inclined to make a target of me again, so I just want you to write that you have attempted my life to-night, and sign your name to it."

Hollis looked at Paxton for a moment in amazement.

"But I don't understand the reason—"

"Oh, don't you?" said Paxton, with a sarcastic smile. "I'll explain then. If I should happen sometime in the future to die by the secret hand of an assassin, this little paper, signed by you, might be a clue to aid the officers of justice in finding out my murderer."

Hollis saw the trap he was in.

"It is nothing but a new sort of life assurance," Paxton continued, dryly. "I think that I shall live longer if you accede to my request."

"And if I do not?"

"Then I'll take you into Biddeford and put you through a course of sprouts for this night's work," Paxton replied, coolly.

"I'll write."

"Good! I am glad that you are reasonable about the matter."

On the back of an old letter, Hollis scribbled the brief confession and signed his name to it.

"You will not use this against me unless I trouble you?" Hollis asked, doubtfully.

"Rest easy on that point; you are perfectly safe as long as you behave yourself."

"I'll try to, but it's hard work for a man to give up the girl he loves," Hollis said, mournfully.

"Nonsense!" Paxton exclaimed, contemptuously. "A man loves a dozen times in his life and he always fancies that the last love is the strongest. A man who goes mad after one woman when the world is full of others just as precious, deserves to be sent to a lunatic asylum. And, by-the-by, if you have any more such attacks as this one to-night, that is most decidedly the proper place for you."

slowly. "Of course you read all about the war?"

"Yes," she wondered at the question. "Wal, now, who was to blame for having all the men killed?"

"Why, I don't understand, father," she replied, in wonder.

"Wal, there was Jeff Davis an' all them Southerners on their side, an' there was Abe Lincoln an' Seward, an' a lot more on our side. Now, if it a-hadn't bin for these men, there wouldn't have bin any war, an' the question I'm puzzling over is, ain't these men to blame for the ones who were killed jes' as much as if they had killed 'em with their own hands?"

Delia had never heard any such reasoning as this before, and she thought the matter over carefully, wondering all the time what could have put such an idea into her father's head.

The old man watched her with eager anxiety.

"Wal, what do you think, Delie—are they to blame or ain't they?"

"I don't think they are, father; it was the antagonism of principles rather than men that brought on the war."

"Then you don't think that the blood of the men who were killed lies at their doors, eh?" he asked, anxiously.

"No, I do not believe that any one would think so," she said.

"Tain't that, Delie?" he cried, earnestly; "taint what any one in this world will think, but how will the account balance when it comes before the last Great Court?"

There was a feverish anxiety about the old man which was pitiful to behold.

"You mean the Day of Judgment, father?"

"Yes, Delie, that's what I mean; how will a man, through whose means other men have died, stand there? Won't their blood cry out ag'in him? Do you s'pose he'll stand any chance to be saved?"

"Father, I wouldn't think of such things," the girl said, coaxingly. "What does it matter? You had nothing to do with bringing on the war. They can not lay any man's death at your door."

"Maybe not—the not," he muttered, absently; "but I'd like to know."

"Here's Mr. Paxton coming up the walk, father," the girl said, happening to look out of the window.

"Mister Paxton?" the old man exclaimed, rousing himself out of his stupor.

"Yes, young Mr. Paxton—Sinclair," she said.

"Oh, I remember; he comes about the mill; a little matter of business."

"I'll run away then, so as not to be in the way."

And she went out through the dining-room into the kitchen where Mary Ann, the "hired girl," was busy among the dishes.

Mary Ann was a brisk, comely girl of twenty.

"Show Mr. Paxton in; he's coming up the walk," Delia said.

"Surely," Mary Ann responded, and she hurried away to the front door, which she reached just as the young man rang the bell.

Paxton was shown into the sitting-room, and Mary Ann returned to the kitchen.

"He's a nice-looking young man," Mary Ann remarked, with a sly glance at the face of the young girl.

"Yes," responded Delia, with an air of indifference which was far from feeling, for Sinclair Paxton was a great favorite of hers.

"Pears to me if I had been you I would have gone and let him in myself," the hired girl continued.

"Why so, Mary Ann?" asked Delia, quietly, but there was a little red spot burning in each cheek.

"For a chance to have had a little quiet chat with him."

"Why, Mary Ann?" and the daughter of the house blushed to her temples; "why should I wish to chat with him?"

"I thought girls allers liked to see their fellows," Mary Ann replied, slyly, enjoying Delia's confusion.

"But he isn't my fellow," Delia protested.

"Isn't your fellow?"

"No."

"Comes here pretty often."

"But he comes to see father on business."

"And not to see you?"

"No, of course not."

"Well, folks think he comes here arter you. Lordy, Delia, I've heard a dozen say, 'what a nice match Delia Embden and Sinclair Paxton will make.'"

"I should think that folks might find something better to do than to talk about any such thing, particularly when there isn't a word of truth in it!" Delia declared, with a flushed face.

"Oh, folks will talk, you know, Delia, and when they talk they must say something. Why, do you know I really thought that you and Mr. Paxton were engaged?"

"Why, Mary Ann?"

"Well, I really did; he's been here so much lately."

"It is because father has a great deal of business to transact with him, but he never comes to see me; I've walked down the street with him two or three times, but it was all accident; we both happened to go out at the same time."

"Well, now, do tell!" Mary Ann exclaimed. "Well, I'm glad that he ain't your beau for one thing."

"Why, what is that?" asked Delia, in astonishment.

"Cos he's got another girl," whispered Mary Ann, mysteriously.

The flush faded from Delia's cheeks, and a spiteful look came into her eyes. Although she had denied that Sinclair was her lover, yet it was plain that Mary Ann's intelligence was not calculated to give her pleasure.

"How do you know he has, Mary Ann?" she asked, with an effort to appear unconcerned.

"Oh, folks know all about it now," Mary Ann said, with an air of satisfaction.

"They were out walking together last night. I guess the old deacon would have stared if he could have seen 'em."

"What is the girl's name?"

"One of the mill-hands—same mill that Sin Paxton is treasurer of; her name is Grace—Lydia Grame."

"Oh, yes, I know her," Delia said, quickly; "that is, I don't mean that I really know her, but I know who she is. She hasn't been here very long."

"No, she came last winter; she's a dreadful proud, stuck-up thing; acts as if she thought that she was better than other people," Mary Ann said, with a toss of the head.

"She is very pretty," Delia observed, thoughtfully.

"Well, that's jest as people think," the hired girl added, a little contemptuously.

"She isn't my style of beauty."

"And is Mr. Paxton really in love with her?"

"You ought to have jest seen 'em walking together last night!" the girl protested.

"I took one look at them, and that satisfied me. I think that it's a shame that some one don't tell his father. He ought to know it."

"Why, she may be a very good girl, Mary Ann," Delia suggested, but there was a tinge of spite in her tone.

"Yes, she may be, and then again she may not be. There isn't anybody in Biddeford that knows any thing about her, who she is, where she comes from, or who she belongs to. Why, she may have a dozen husbands, for all anybody knows here."

"I don't see how the deacon could stop it, even if he knew it," Delia said, thoughtfully.

"He'd find a way! Deacon Edmund Paxton knows more than all the rest of Biddeford put together. I only wish he knew all about it."

Delia did not reply, and the conversation turned upon other subjects. The seed was planted, though, in fruitful soil.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 140.)

Death-Notch, the Destroyer;

OR, THE SPIRIT LAKE AVENGERS.

BY OLL COMBES,

AUTHOR OF "HAWKEYE HARRY," "BOY SPY," "IRONSIDES, THE SCOUT," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXXI.

A DESERTED VILLAGE.

IN the mean time, Omaha was meeting with adventures no less exciting than Old Shadow, even if they were less dangerous.

He had made nearly the whole of his half of the circuit, when a rough briar thicket pressed his course in toward the village.

This brought him in dangerous juxtaposition to an Indian sentinel seated on a log under a branching oak.

The Indian challenged him in the Sioux dialect, of which Omaha was a complete master. The Friendly gave him a muttered reply, and, as retreat would likely arouse suspicion, he walked boldly up and seated himself on the log by the guard; though he kept his hand on his tomahawk.

The cunning sentinel seemed to be a little suspicious of the scout, and leaning forward he peered into his very face.

The next instant Omaha's tomahawk was buried to the eye in his brain, and with scarcely a shudder the Sioux sunk to the earth.

This deed was done so silently that it suggested a daring adventure to the scout.

He divested himself of his own clothing and donned that of the dead Sioux, from moccasins to head-dress. Then a few skillful touches of war-paint—which the Omaha always carried—changed him into a Sioux, and with the guard's blanket around his shoulders, his rifle in his hand, the youth turned and strode into the village with a boldness that served its purpose and aroused no suspicion. The savages were hurrying to and fro through the village in no little excitement. They seemed upon the eve of some event of unusual character.

Omaha soon found that his disguise was perfect, yet he did not betray the least sign of curiosity. He kept constantly on the move, passing from lodge to lodge to ascertain whether or not there were any captives in the village. He found nothing, and would have departed at once, had he not been a little desirous of knowing what the savages meant by their hasty and excited stirring about. Had it only been a temporary encampment he would have at once concluded they were going to break camp, but he being their permanent village he was thrown into a quandary, from which he resolved to relieve himself.

He mingled with the largest parties, and in moving about with them, finally found himself near the tent of the Great Medicine.

This dignitary he knew was a wise man. He had learned it from one who had once been a captive in the hands of the Sioux.

He was satisfied he was a cowardly villain, who, knowing the sacredness with which he was guarded, never dreamed that an enemy could possibly get into his tent. Acting upon this belief, Omaha raised the flap door and entered the lodge.

The Medicine-man sat upon a deep pile of skins, enveloped in the folds of a curious yet beautifully wrought blanket, and smoking a pipe on the head of his tomahawk.

He scarcely moved his head when Omaha entered, but, when the latter addressed him in a low tone, he glanced quickly up at him, as if he penetrated his disguise through the medium of his voice. Then he replied in a tone that was low and guttural in its accents. But now it was Omaha's turn to stare.

The Medicine seemed to notice his embarrassment and began pulling away at his pipe until his head and face had disappeared from Omaha's sight, in a cloud of smoke.

"What does the young brave want in the lodge of the Great Medicine?" the man of herbs finally asked.

"He comes for words that will cure his heart of the dread of Death-Notch, the pale-face that hunts for Sioux scalps."

"Then the young warrior's heart is cowardly."

"I have taken many scalps in battle, and does not every heart tremble at the name of Death-Notch?"

"Yes, the young Scalp-Hunter is a terrible foe, yet he is but mortal. Arrows or bullets well aimed will slay him. But you are not in fear of him. You are disgraced. You are an enemy to the Sioux—you are Omaha, the Friendly."

The young scout grasped his tomahawk, but before he could raise it, the Medicine laid his hand upon his arm and said:

"Let Omaha have no fear of me! I know why you are here—the same for which I came. The Medicine-man lies dead under the skin I sit upon. Look, Omaha, at that lodge-pole. I sit upon a notch upon it. I cut it there! I am Death-Notch! Go leave me quick; you look so like a Sioux that I might slay you. Go back to those that await you and tell them that there are many captives here, and that Inkpaducak is preparing to move his village at daybreak."

Omaha waited for no further orders or information, but left the lodge and soon worked himself from the village.

A few moments later he heard a savage yell which satisfied him that Death-Notch's presence had been discovered.

Out in the forest at the appointed place, Omaha and Old Shadow met. They ex-

changed a few hasty words and then began their retreat to the camp of the Avengers.

As they moved on, each told the other his adventures, and when Old Shadow learned of Death-Notch being in the Indian village, he said:

"Whew! bet a picayune I'll fly while that critter's in camp; but, enny dislikery of the gals?"

"Yes," Death-Notch said they were there."

"That's the cackle!" the old hunter exclaimed, "and we'll have 'em or bust."

In due time the scouts arrived in camp. Ralph St. Leger was there. They at once delivered their information to their friends.

When Omaha narrated his adventure with Death-Notch in the lodge of the Medicine, a smile was seen to play about the lips of Ralph St. Leger, but none save Fred Travis and Omaha knew its import.

Now arose the question: how were the captives to be rescued? The question was easier asked than answered, for the enemy were fifty to one, and would have to be attacked within their own stronghold. However, the captives must be rescued, at all hazards, and the little band resolved to make the attempt that night—near morning.

So a guard was posted, and the band lay down to rest a few hours' rest and sleep before the time for the ordeal came. But no sleep came to the eyes of one of the party. They all lay upon the hard earth, thinking of the coming conflict and its probable result. They had little upon which to base a single hope of victory, but men under such circumstances are determined and desperate. They never let a fear or doubt stay a resolution.

Each one of the little band, unless it was Old Shadow, had pictured to himself the rescue of a friend—either a sweetheart, sister or mother. Even Omaha had hopes of meeting friends taken captive by the Sioux in their raid upon the Omaha country.

When the hour for action had come, every man was upon his feet, with rifle in hand, and under the guidance of Old Shadow, they set off toward the Indian village.

As they neared the town they were not a little surprised at the deep silence that prevailed around the place. Not the bark of a dog could be heard, nor the glimmer of a dying camp-fire seen. All was wrapped in profound silence and darkness. There were, however, voices in the wilderness. The sharp bark of a wolf hanging on the outskirts of the village, the "who-who-hoo" of the owl, and the wailing of insects could be heard all around.

"Durn my ole riggin'!" exclaimed Old Shadow, "things seem a little dull and glum down thar. I reckon as what Death-Notch put a damper on their spirits when he carved in the clam-shell of their ole Medicine hump, and they've all gone into mounin' over it."

"Ugh!" ejaculated Omaha, "that silence mean something else—something unusual."

"It is singular that not a sound can be heard from the village," said Fred Travis.

"All in bed, I reckon," said Old Shadow, "and I'd give a picayune to knock the bottom out and heave the whole caboodle into the sulphur diggin's. But see here, boys, I'll make a little feel down to'rds the camp and see what's up."

"Very well; we will remain here till you return," said Travis.

The old scout took his departure, and something like half an hour had elapsed when he was heard coming toward them, singing:

"The possum he grinned at the ole hedgehog, At the ole hedgehog, at the ole . . ."

"Hark, there!" suddenly demanded Phelix O'Ray, "yees will arrhose the whole Inging country wid that bell-clapper ave youn." Dem it, man, what do ye mane?"

"Givin' vent to the exuberance of my spirits, I am, young Ireland," replied the scout.

"Well, what discovery, old friend?" asked Travis.

"The red varlets have gone—every cuss o' 'em—weemen, men, brats and all."

"What! broke camp?" exclaimed St. Leger.

"Yes; Death-Notch's doin' must hev' hurried 'em up a leetle. They went westward, and my notion is they'll not stop this side of the Big Muddy."

"Boys," said St. Leger, and his voice was sad and low, "I am afraid it will be a long time ere our hopes are realized, if they ever are. But, what say you, Avengers? Shall we take up their trail and follow them, or not?"

"Follow them!—trail them to death!" cried Fred Travis, and his words were repeated by every tongue.

CHAPTER XXXII.

ON THE TRAIL.

AT early dawn on the following morning, the Avengers were upon the trail.

From the course taken by the Sioux, it was evident they were aiming for the country beyond the Missouri river. They had every advantage of their pursuers not only in the start and in point of strength, but they were mounted, and in a fair way of increasing instead of diminishing the distance between them. However, the hardy band pressed on with a desperate determination to accomplish their object—to rescue their friends.

For two days they traveled, without coming in sight of the main column of the savages, but the freshness of their animals' hoof-prints told that they were not far in advance; and, occasionally, a scout was seen scouring over the plain at either the right or the left of the trail.

On the second night the pursuers camped in a deep and densely wooded defile in that picturesque range of bluffs overlooking the Missouri river. Scrubby oaks of some fifteen or twenty feet in height, interlaced with wild grape-vines and creepers, covered the face of the bluffs, and extending down into the bottom, blocked from view the entrance to the defile.

Once within the defile, it could only be left by the way it was entered, for the cliffs on all sides were perpendicular, and in some places shelving. It was dark when our friends reached this secluded spot. For fear of danger, they did not strike a fire. It is well they did not, for Omaha, who had been put on guard, soon made his appearance in camp and said:

"We are in danger. Three score of Sioux warriors have encamped on the plain near the mouth of the defile."

"By snakes!" exclaimed Old Shadow, "that's a fact, fur I can sniff the smoke of their camp-fire this blessed mornin'. Ah, thar goes a red varlet's bazoo."

"I am afraid we're in a close place," said Ralph St. Leger.

"Bet a picayune on it, Ralph," said the hunter; "if they don't know we're here now they'll find it out purty soon in the mornin', or ye may take my mouth for a fly-trap."

"I presume we have not been as cautious as we should have been, if we have let savages coop us up in this defile," said Fred Travis.

"Wal, I'll tell ye, younker, we can do Death-Notch on't and cut our way out here rather than perish. But jist lay it, and things may all work out right yit."

And, acting upon this advice, guards were posted wherever there was the least chance of a savage approaching; then those not on duty lay down to rest.

The night wore away, and morning dawned clear and bright, and as the sun glanced across the plain, the Avengers saw the danger that menaced them. Fully three score of savage warriors were encamped on the plain, close up to the little clump of oaks that stood like a door at the mouth of the defile. Their animals were picketed to grass west of the camp. A row of lances, stuck in the ground, were aligned in a semicircle about the camp, and at the foot of each weapon lay its owner's side-arms and horse-equipage.

They were upon the war-path. This our friends could tell by their paint and the absence of females. But why had they encamped there?

Our friends saw them build small fires and broil venison upon them. This done, they eat their meal in silence. Then some strolled out along the base of the cliffs, while others lounged about in listless, idle attitudes that convinced the Avengers they had gone into a temporary encampment for, no telling how long, nor for what purpose.

This was an unfortunate state of affairs for our friends. They could not make their exit from the defile by a rear passage. If they would escape at all, it must be made through the defile where they had entered, in the very face of the foe.

Toward noon several of the warriors had mounted their ponies, took up their lances and galloped away toward the south.

"Blast 'em," muttered Old Shadow, "the royal ole devil's in 'em red-skins, boys. Y'ere elected for a day or two, ennyhow. Them lopin' hounds are goin' off on a hunt. They've probably discovered a herd o' buffalo."

"Time will tell," said Ralph St. Leger; "we have only got to be quiet and patient. If the savages do not discover our trail leading into the defile, we may escape them."

An hour or more had passed when a yell of a savage triumph was heard far over the plain. Our friends turned their eyes in the direction from whence the sound came, and saw the warriors that had left camp re- turning. They were leading two riderless horses, and on the point of a lance two heeking-scalps were dangling. These spoke plainer than words of what had taken them from camp. The horses they led were of the new American stock, spirited and mettlesome, and had evidently belonged to white men.

When the savages entered camp they were greeted with a joyous shout. They drew in, thrust their spears in the ground, and dismounted. They tethered their ponies at grass again, but the two captured animals were retained in camp to be admired and commented upon.

Presently two athletic-looking warriors, stripped of all their clothing but the loincloth, came forward and mounted the retreating, chafing animals, and, with the two scalp-attached to a spear-head, they dashed away at a furious speed and rode in a circle about the camp, uttering their fearful scalp-cry and executing wondrous feats of horsemanship.

They rode out and out from the camp in a spiral line. At last one of the demon riders dashed away over the plain at a fearful speed, while the horse of the other became unmanageable, and bounding away toward the bluffs, plunged into the dense body of shrubbery and came charging up into the defile—into the very midst of our friends!

"Kapter the varlet, boys, kapter him!" exclaimed Old Shadow, in an undertone.

Quick as said the youths leaped from their covert, and while Death-Notch seized the animal by the bits and threw it back upon its haunches, others seized the savage, and, dragging him to the earth, bound and gagged him before he could give the alarm. Not a sound, likely to create suspicion, was made. But, what now were our friends to do with him? His non-appearance would soon bring friends into the defile in search of him. Then escape would be impossible.

Omaha was put on the watch, and he saw that the savages on the plain had turned their heads and were watching the savage that was riding over the prairie, though now and then they would glance anxiously toward the little chapparral at the mouth of the defile.

"What do ye say to do with the blasted skunk, boys?" asked Old Shadow; "come, belch out yer pinion, fur we've not a munit to lose."

"No time is precious. This Indian must be got out of here as once, or every red-skin will be upon us."

"That's the cackle, and I perpose we send him outen here a-bunkin'," replied Old Shadow.

"How will we do it?" asked young Harriott.

"Bind him on the back of this hoss, put a burr under the critter's tail, turn him loose, and let it go outen the defile."

The savage seemed to have understood the old hunter's words, and the look he fixed upon him fairly caused him to wince.

"It will be our only chance, boys," Fred Travis said, in reply to the old hunter, "and if it works successfully, the attitude of the savage on the horse may draw the attention of his friends so as to give us an opportunity to escape from the defile, and hide ourselves in the adjacent chapparral."

"That's the cackle, Freddy," said the hunter; "now, let's lift the stinkin' sinner to the hoss's back. There, up he goes—h-h, steady, hoss! Here, one o' ye pull out the critter's halter and bridle to tie the varlet on with."

The bridle and halter were taken off the trembling beast, and while St. Leger held him by the muzzle, the others bound the savage to the beast's back.

When the task was completed, the animal's head was turned down the defile, then one of the Avengers gave it a cut with a keen switch that sent it plunging in madness and affright down the stony valley.

Like an arrow it shot from the chapparral out on to the plain, and, with glowing eyes and dilated nostrils, it dashed through the

camp of the savages, trampling down the warriors that appeared in its path, and plunging wildly and madly on over the prairie.

The savages stood dumbfounded and amazed. They could scarcely realize the perilous situation of their friend, nor the manner in which he had gotten into such a dilemma. The change from the free rider to the helpless, bound prisoner, as it were, was made so quick that they could attribute his situation to no other source than his own free and fearless will.

They believed he put himself in that position to make a more startling display of his feats of horsemanship and wonderful daring, but, when his cries for help rung out over the plain, they supposed he had become entangled in the gearings of the animal. Wild with excitement, some of the warriors dashed away on foot in pursuit of the flying steed, while those that took a second thought mounted their ponies and spurred away.

Omaha, the look-out, at once reported the run of affairs. The camp was deserted by all but half a dozen warriors.

"Let us wait until the others are out of gunshot," said Ralph St. Leger; "then we can make a charge upon those in camp, drive them off, and mount some of their best ponies and flee."

"Bravo!" exclaimed Old Shadow; "you've got the royal rim about you. A hoss will be quite an item to me, while to a hoss I'd be a mere shader."

At this juncture Omaha informed them that the savages were a quarter of a mile away in hot pursuit of the flying steed and its hapless burden.

"Then, forward, boys," exclaimed young Travis; "make your aim certain, and your choice of a pony good."

green grass would keep the flames in check, from sweeping onward like an irresistible wave, but the smoke arising therefrom would soon cover the face of the great plain, and make it impossible for one to live and breathe under it. This the savages knew, and they had fired the prairie with the intention of smoking the Avengers across the plain, and in all probability, into some trap which they had or would have prepared.

As the shadows of night continued to gather, the light of the burning prairie began to shoot athwart the sky, and roll in dull, lurid waves down toward them with no little rapidity.

"Let us press on, boys, a little faster," said young Travis; "if the wind should gain strength, it will scatter the smoke over the whole plain and suffocate us. If, however, we should come to a water-course, we might make a halt and escape the dangers of the fire. But I will not consent to desert my pony to the mercy of the fire, now that it has carried me beyond immediate peril."

Nor I," repeated his companions. They galloped along at a slow pace, conversing in an undertone, when suddenly, their faded animals pricked up their ears and sniffed the air uneasily.

"Boys," said Death-Notch, "there is danger about. These animals—" He did not finish the sentence. A terrible sound rushed suddenly athwart the darkness. It was a sound resembling the roll of thunder—deep-toned and awful—low at first, but gradually gathering volume of sound. But it was not thunder. The sky was clear. Besides that, sound seemed rolling along the face of the earth. There was no doubt of this, for they could feel the very ground trembling under their animals' hoofs.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 136.)

Bianco; OR, THE HERMIT'S STORY.

BY COL. PRENTISS INGRAHAM.

In one of the most beautiful of the mountainous portions of the State of Virginia stands an old homestead, now rapidly crumbling away.

The broad porticoes, massive columns, and heavy windows, give it an old baronial look, indicative of former grandeur and magnificence, but time, the destroyer of all works of man, has brought ruin and desolation upon the whole domain. Broad untilled fields spread for miles around, the lawn is overgrown with rank weeds, the carriage drives through the dense forest no longer echo to the sound of wheels, and the low of cattle, the cry of the herdsman, and the bark of the dog, no more break the stillness that haunts the time-worn ruin.

The broad domain is shunned by all in the neighborhood, for a dark story rests upon the decaying homestead, and few there were who cared to visit the scene of desolation.

Not many miles distant from the Anchorage—for as such was the decaying estate known—was a small farm-house, in which dwelt a mother and her son, and several negro servants.

The farm was small, but its fields were well tilled; the house, a very tiny affair, yet comfortable and neat, looking like, what it was, a quiet home.

Here lived, upon the Daisy Farm, the widow Maynard, and her only son, Bianco, a youth of seventeen when I first met him as a dark student at Princeton College.

With a dark, Spanish face, a supple figure, and polished manners, Bianco was of a proud, unbending nature, and particularly reserved toward his companions, excepting myself; from the first we were friends.

Graduating before I did, Bianco spent a few months in traveling, and, while at Niagara Falls, met with a young and lovely girl, the accomplished daughter and only child of a New York millionaire, and, ere many days passed in her society, learned to love her with all the depth of his impassioned nature.

Irene Irving returned the love of Bianco, and secretly they became engaged; secretly, because Mr. Irving had told Irene, when he noticed the deep interest the young people felt for each other, that he had other views for her than marrying her to a broken-down Virginian, whose name was all he could boast.

Bianco, learning the feeling of Mr. Irving toward him, sought that gentleman, and told him of his love for his daughter, and that he wished to claim her as his wife, for he was able to give her a comfortable home among the Virginia hills, although he could not support her in the luxury in which she had been brought up.

A stormy scene ensued, and ended in the banishment of Bianco from the presence of the woman he loved.

Returning home, the young man came by Princeton to visit me, and made me promise to spend my vacation with him.

It was September ere I could keep my promise, and then I lied away to the mountainous country in which was situated the farm of Bianco's mother.

A warm welcome greeted me, and in that old farm-house I was happy.

Bianco was indisposed for several days, and alone I would mount a fine thoroughbred horse placed at my disposal, and dash over mountain and valley, lost in admiration at the scene around me.

It was in one of these horseback excursions that I came upon the ruined Anchorage estate, and, in surprise at its ruin, sprung from my horse, and traversed its deserted halls.

The sound of my tread gave back a dull, lonely echo; the old stairway creaked beneath my step, and an owl, frightened by the unexpected invasion into his ruined retreat, hooted forth his melancholy note of woe, and flew away.

Impressed by the sad scene, I returned to my horse and rode away.

At supper, that evening, I mentioned my visit to the deserted homestead, and could not fail to notice that my words affected both Bianco and his mother, so I dropped the subject.

In a hunting excursion, that Bianco and myself went upon, into the mountains, we found ourselves, toward evening, upon a lofty wooded point of land that contained an extensive view of the country around; the other distant ranges of blue mountains, the valley below, dotted with homesteads, and then the vast uncultivated lands of the Anchorage, with the old mansion, far in under the shadow of the mountain—all together presented a magnificent view of

lovely nature and man's artifice combined.

Observing my looks resting upon the Anchorage mansion, Bianco observed:

"That is the ruined estate you visited a few days ago; it recalls painful remembrances to my mother and myself, and for that reason we never refer to it. Had I my rights, that old home would now be mine, and then the wealth of Irene's father would not equal mine own."

"Has it passed entirely out of your hands, Bianco?" I asked.

"Yes; there is a dark mystery hanging over its ownership; a secret that has never been cleared up; but—Ha! what was that?"

"It seemed like a groan; let us see where it came from," I answered, for distinctly there had come to our ears a sound, as if of a human being in distress.

Back a few steps from the point of land, the mountain arose in a cliff, to the height of sixty feet, and at its base I discerned a small opening, evidently the entrance to a cavern.

With pistols in hand, ready to meet either friend or foe, we turned a projection of the rock, and there a sight met us which was as startling as unexpected.

Lying upon a low wooden bed, back from the large opening of the cavern, was the figure of a man, emaciated and worn.

A torn blanket and quilt were drawn half over his form, and the face before us was pinched with fell disease and suffering.

Once that man had been a noble creature, but a wreck alone remained: his hair and beard, grown long, and matted from want of care, was as white as snow, and presented a strange contrast to his dark, restless eyes.

"In God's name, who are you, and what do you here?" exclaimed Bianco, stepping forward, and bending beside the prostrate man.

"Boy, I have lived here for years, but the white sands have been sifted by Time upon my head, and now my days, my hours are numbered," said the old man, in a weak voice.

"You are suffering; can I not aid you?" for this is no place for you to remain," said Bianco, feelingly.

"And yet I have lived here eighteen years; for you were then a boy of five, Bianco Maynard."

"What! you know me?"

"Know you? Yes; and from your eyes I see your dead father looking upon me; his gaze haunts me now."

"Listen, Bianco; I have grievously wronged you and yours, but now, in my dying hour, I wish to redeem the past. You have a friend with you, and together you shall listen to my story of crime; but listen quietly to the end."

In the last century the old estate of the Anchorage was built by Lord Basil Maynard, who was a distinguished naval officer in the English service.

"Resigning from the navy he bought lands in Virginia, and here built the homestead called the Anchorage; marrying an American lady, he gave up his allegiance to England, and became a citizen of this country."

"The result of the marriage were two sons—Basil and Bianco Maynard, and upon the death of their father and mother, the vast property was left equally divided between the boys."

Basil married and settled down upon the estate, while Bianco became a wild, reckless wanderer, throwing his money away, and dissipating through his best years.

"To his brother Basil he mortgaged his total property, and with the proceeds left the country."

"In riotous living five years passed, and a penniless vagabond Bianco returned, and his brother once more aided him."

"But to no purpose, Bianco still persisted in his wild life, and judging he could no longer obtain any money from his brother, went to the Anchorage in the dead of night, and slew him as he lay in bed, for his wife and his little son, your mother and yourself, boy, were away upon a visit."

"Seizing a strong box which contained all of the valuable family jewels, thousands of dollars in gold, and the titles and deeds to all the American estates, Bianco fled; but to come here, and here he has remained since, a crime-stained, haunted being ever since, unable to leave the spot where he could feast his eyes upon the scene of his foul deed. Bianco—do you know me now?"

The old hermit ceased speaking, and fixed his burning eyes upon his nephew, who stood as if entranced beside him.

"I know you; you have come to my mother and myself a foul wrong, but we have been avenged in your own sufferings. Bianco Maynard, I forgive you, and shall not mock your dying hours."

"God bless you, my son! But I have not yet completed all I would say. Back yonder in that cavern, where I have lived for eighteen years, creeping out in the night to obtain food, I have the strong-box, with all of its contents untouched. Take it, and you are once again an heir to riches untold; for I know that your mother fled with you from the Anchorage, after the death of your father, and that you now live in poverty, as it were, when you should have rolled in wealth."

"Here, I can not allow you to die thus, for you know you are fast falling; I will at once go for comforts, and return with a physician, for you may yet be better. My friend will remain with you until my return," and away Bianco started, and soon his horse's hoofs resounded as he dashed down the mountain path.

Three hours I sat beside the dying man, and watched his quickly falling breath.

Around him were many signs of his long hermitage, and in one part the cavern was rather comfortably fitted up, while a rifle and several pistols hung from brackets upon the rocky walls, and a number of books lay scattered around.

Here had the wretched, crime-stained man passed eighteen years of bitter misery, held, as if by fascination, in sight of his cruel deed of blood, and unable to flee away and enjoy his Cain-accursed riches.

At length Bianco returned, accompanied by the neighborhood physician, and a servant bearing a number of comforts.

All did was useless, however, for the aged hermit lived but a few hours longer, pleading with his latest breath for forgiveness.

There, on that lonely mountain, he found a grave, and Bianco came into possession of his vast estates. The Anchorage was refitted; and, one of Virginia's richest sons, he soon won the consent of Mr. Irving to marry the fair Irene, and in the lordly home they now live, happy in each other's love.

My Housekeeping.

BY JAMES B. HENLEY.

ONE evening, in the month of June while lying at full length on the sofa, in my pleasant sitting-room, smoking a cigar, my wife, who had often spoken to me about her desire to go to Long Branch, just for a few days, again began to plead for permission to go, and some money.

"What shall I do while you are absent?" I asked, by way of trying her.

"You can get your meals at a restaurant, or you can cook them here."

This answer was just what I expected, so I replied:

"Well, Sarah, you can go, and I'll keep house. Here is some money."

"Oh! what a good, kind husband you are!" she cried. "I'll start by the nine o'clock boat, to-morrow morning."

The next morning at half-past eight, she had only about half completed her toilet; but, by hard exertions, we managed to reach the boat, perspiring freely, just as the gang-plank was being pulled ashore.

I grasped her sash and shawl and flung them on board the boat, striking an aged colored lady full in the face, which laid her on her back on the deck, which feat everybody seemed to consider intensely ludicrous, judging from the road smiles with which it was greeted.

My wife gathered all her energies for a jump, which she made in true race-horse style, landing with great precision in the lap of an old apple-woman, upsetting her stock of merchandise, that was piled up in a basket in front of her, which rolled in every direction.

Just how the affair was settled I was unable to see, on account of the fast-receding boat, so I wiped the perspiration from my brow, and turning, walked in the direction of my place of business.

As I was returning home that evening, I thought of the pleasing time I should have cooking my own victuals. Such biscuits and griddle-cakes! Enough to make one's mouth water.

I made my supper off of a piece of cold ham and a biscuit, it being too warm to build a fire.

The next day was Sunday, and I determined to have some griddle-cakes for breakfast, although it was not just the season for them.

I obtained the flour, salt and water, together with some shortening, consisting of some tallow from roast beef, because I could not find any thing else, placed them in a large water-pitcher and filled the pitcher about half full of water.

After I had stirred it about ten minutes, the batter did not seem to me to be all right, so I lighted a cigar and sat down, and gazing abstractedly at the batter, pondered.

Light broke at last. *Yeast!* I had forgotten that; so I proceeded to the bakery, but not knowing how much was required, I purchased ten cents' worth.

I emptied the whole of it into the pitcher, set it behind the stove, shut up the cat, and retired to bed, well satisfied with my evening's work, and thinking of the delicious cakes for the morning's breakfast.

I arose early next morning, attired myself in one of my wife's wrappers, and descended to the kitchen prepared to enjoy my triumph; but I didn't. No, not a bit of triumph did I enjoy.

The yeast was strong enough to raise a house from its foundation, and the batter would not be on the safe side, so I scraped up a portion of it and put it into another dish. I then built a fire, after several unsuccessful attempts, which filled the room with smoke, making it more like a smoke-house than any thing else, placed my griddle on the stove and commenced setting the table for breakfast.

After breaking several of my wife's best glass dishes, a cup and two plates, and treading on the cat's tail, for which favor I became the recipient of a long and deep scratch on the calf of my leg, I managed to get dishes enough on the table to eat breakfast with.

The first lot of cakes stuck faster than a poor-man's plaster to the griddle. Ditto, second lot, only more. My dream of delicious griddle-cakes was rapidly vanishing, when I happened to think that I had not greased the griddle.

I hastened toward the pantry, and seizing what I supposed to be a bowl of grease, hurried back to the stove. Not noticing its light red color, I inserted my finger into it, in lieu of a knife, lifted a liberal quantity of it up, and deposited it upon one end of the griddle.

Imagining that it was too hot, I lifted it up, and while endeavoring to turn the thing around, dropped it upon my tenderest corn, which caused me to consign it to a certain unmentionable warm region.

Considering wounds received in a good cause as marks of honor, I lifted the griddle from the floor and set it once more upon the stove.

I poured some batter upon it, and soon had the satisfaction of seeing it cook nicely. When I had cooked about ten or fifteen cakes, I sat down to the table and began to eat.

The first mouthful tasted rather strangely, but I did not notice it particularly. I had eaten about five or six, when, happening to glance under the stove, saw, for the first time, that what I had supposed to be a bowl of grease, was, in fact, a very large, noised bottle, which was nearly labeled:

"BROWN'S WINDSOR POMADE."

I lost my appetite immediately, and hastening toward the ash-box, offered up a sacrifice, after which I felt much better. I think those cakes can be considered a total loss.

It was now about ten o'clock, church time, and I had not yet eaten any substantial breakfast.

I began prancing around the house, in no very amiable mood, in search of some ready-cooked victuals.

I soon espied a half of a ham hanging on a nail in the pantry. To reach it down, cut a slice from it, put it into a fry-pan, and set it upon the stove, was the work of a moment.

It had hissed and danced in the pan for about twenty minutes, when I concluded that it was about done.

I had just lifted it from the stove, when the door-bell rang violently.

I set the pan down under the stove, and hurried to answer the summons, forgetful of my rather fantastical appearance.

It was one of my wife's friends, who glanced at me in surprise; asked after my wife; talked about the weather, her neighbors, and almost every thing I can think of at present. Yes, for exactly fifty-five min-

utes, by my chronometer, that worldly-minded young female sat there and talked. Talked, until I thought she had lost all control over her tongue, and that it was wagging with a sort of mechanical movement, but every thing must come to an end, and so did her talking. She finally arose and danced toward the hall-door, still talking all the way, and declaring that she had not said one-half that she wished to.

Heaven preserve me from listening to the remaining portion!

I looked and bolted the door after her, determined not to admit anybody, and went back to the kitchen. Such a sight!

The batter had again overflowed and was spread, like a miniature lake, over the carpet, in the center of which lay my slice of ham, where it had been dropped by the cat, when she found it too hot for her. She seemed hungry, so I offered her some of the griddle-cakes. She sniffed at them disdainfully, and walked away.

I gave up in despair; shoveled up the wreck of my expected breakfast; threw it into the ash-box, and retiring to my room, threw myself upon my bed, and soon forgot my hunger in slumber.

When I awoke, it was about five o'clock, and with a ravenous appetite.

I thought I should like some biscuits for supper, so I obtained the necessary ingredients, and made some. For richness, palatability, and strength, those biscuits completely outdid every thing in the leather line that I had ever seen or heard of; but, remembering a certain little piece of poetry which resembles the following:

"If at first you don't succeed, Try, try again—"

I did try again; but with no better success, and heaving a great sigh, I deposited them gently and tenderly upon the roof of my neighbor's shanty, taking a placid satisfaction in thinking that I had performed my duty if they proved fatal to some of the numerous musical quadrupeds that make night hideous with their concerts.

I was just making up my mind that if something did not happen soon, I should starve in the midst of plenty, when I thought of the restaurant; so I went out and procured some supper; but it was little better than what I could produce at home; so I shook the dust of that restaurant off my feet, and determined to get something to eat at home, or starve in the attempt.

I thought of the numerous dishes that I liked, and concluded to have some baked beans for supper next day, being very fond of them. I purchased a pint, deposited them in a pot of water, before I left the house next morning.

At noon, having a few leisure moments, I went home, and emptied them into a flat sheet-iron pan, and set them in the oven to bake. When I returned home at night, I opened the oven door. They looked nice, but appearances are very deceitful. I noticed, also, that I had forgotten to put any pork into them; but that made no difference. I lifted a spoonful, and laid them upon my plate. Could shoot rattler louder? I tried to masticate one. Stone could not be wiser. I concluded that I did not like beans, anyway, and in a fit of generosity I emptied them out of the back-window into my neighbor's yard.

About a week afterward he presented me with a bill for the value of three chickens, that had died from dyspepsia, caused by eating them, he having, very ingeniously, traced back the ownership of said beans to me. I paid it mournfully and in silence.

This was my last attempt at cooking, and in desperation I rushed to the telegraph office, and telegraphed to my wife to come home, or I would commit suicide.

She returned the next day, and never did anybody receive a more hearty welcome than she did.

This was my first and last attempt at housekeeping alone.

I eat now, with touching resignation, any thing that is placed before me, and never allude to my skill and system in cooking.

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ALL ALONE. A LAKE-SIDE MONODY.

BY LAUNCE PONTZ.

"The day has faded into gloom, and sunk behind the purple west,
Fast falling dun;
The cawing crow has flapped his homeward way to seek his distant nest,
Far from the sun;
The sad-eyed twilight broods in gloom above the dusky lake's breast,
And covers with its dusky pall my weary heart that knows no rest,
All, all alone."
Why waits she in the twilight there, with sad gaze fixed upon the sky?
Whither now run
The thoughts that crowd her heart, and bring the wistful longing to her eye?
What has she done,
That she should cower 'neath the reeds, and sit the silent lakeside by?
To listen where the ripples weep, and echo back the sad wind's sigh?
All, all alone!
"Twas here we parted, when the spring came twitting with the singing bird,
And now he's gone!
The summer winds have swept away the anger of his parting brow,
And autumn brown
Comes moaning o'er the hilltops, 'mid the dying leaflets faintly heard,
And murmurs through the rustling flags, the melancholy breeze has stirred,
All, all alone!"
"All, all alone, no more to gladden, listening to the step I love,
How the winds moan!
The coming tempest rages far away, and thunder rolls above
Deep monotone!
And he I love has gone away in bitterness, the world to rove,
And my false pride has left me here, to vainly mourn the word that drove
My darling one
Away alone,
All, all alone!"

Amy Livingston's Mistake.

BY LETTIE ARTLEY IRONS.

"Good-by, Amy; I'll bring you some flowers when I return. Don't get lonely." Pretty, thoughtless, Vida West nodded carelessly. Ross Glover bowed with his usual grace, and then they were all going down the path, this merry party of young people; and Amy Livingston, seated in her wheeled-chair by the open window, with her feet lying helpless on the crimson cushions, looked after them silently, but with a mute appeal in her brown eyes that might have touched a heart of stone.
Laughing, chattering like magpies, they went down the grassy path, without a thought of her, careless, free and happy—and she sat there, helpless in her invalid chair, denied all the pleasures of life, sorrowful and alone.
Just how dreary the world looked to her on this pleasant June day, all alive with the breath of flowers and songs of birds, it was given to none but God and the angels to know. None other knew—could know—the utter depth of loneliness in her heart; but Dr. Roslyn Armitage, the handsome young physician, of West Fernleigh, coming quietly along the shady by-path in the garden, and stopping for a moment among the vines to watch the sweet, pale face, with its sadly patient mouth, guessed something of it. All through the blossoming spring he had watched from a distance the growing sadness of the firm, rather reticent lips, and changeful, tawny eyes, watched them with a feeling such as only a pure, noble-hearted man could know. While he looked, now, she folded her hands—pitifully white, helpless little hands they were—in her lap, and leaning her head on the cushion, closed her eyes wearily.
"Poor child!" he murmured, under his breath; "and I must deal her another blow. If I thought—" His dark eyes lighted as he moved forward, then darkened suddenly as he caught sight of the distant walking party, with Vida West in their midst. "I wonder if love makes us all selfish," he muttered, musing the steps.
Amy sat, with closed eyes and contracted brow, listening to the faint sound of her sister-in-law's voice, that came in from the distant kitchen, where she was having a sharp altercation with the servant, wondering why it was that every thing in her life must be so unpleasant. Mrs. Livingston's temper was uncertain—it showed itself sometimes to poor Amy, and her life in her brother's house was very hard to endure. How the hasty, corrosive words, and little acts of neglect hurt her, no one could know. She was trying now to school herself to greater patience, when a sound at the open door caused her to start. She looked up to see Dr. Armitage.
A faint flush rose to her face at sight of him—not the least among her many sorrows was her love for this man who stood looking down upon her, so tall and grave—so handsome in his perfect manhood—her hopeless love, ah! that was what made it so bitter. How utterly her hungering heart had gone out to him not even himself suspected and he did not love her—she thought of it with a sharp pang, that for an instant whitened her very lips.
With a strong effort she recovered herself, remembering his errand. There had been a council of physicians concerning her, and he had come to report their decision.
"You came to tell me what conclusion you have arrived at," she said, bravely broaching the subject, after the first words of greeting. "I am waiting to hear."
"We have decided that unless there is an unexpected change—" He hesitated, dreading to tell her the worst.
"Go on," she said, steadily, "I am no coward."
"That the disease is incurable," he said, slowly.
"How long may I live?"
"Possibly, an ordinary lifetime."
She answered nothing, only looked at him a moment, and then turned her face to the window. Before her lay the bright June landscape—the low-lying river on the one hand, the village nestling among the hills on the other, all bathed in the glorious summer sunshine, a shaft of which, streaming through the open casement, fell upon her head, lighting up her loose, gold-brown hair, and crowning her, as if with a blessing—what a mockery it seemed!
A possible lifetime—and such a life—she wondered if she could endure it. Her lips quivered pitifully, but the proud reticence that never deserted her kept back the tears. A strong shudder went over her—otherwise she did not move.
Dr. Armitage crossed the room and laid his hand on her head.
"Amy, child—if only I might help you!" She drew away as only a strong, proud woman, suffering as she suffered, longing

for love and sympathy as she longed, could have done, and motioned him away.
"Don't!" she said, lowly; "it is hard enough without being pitied. If I have trouble, I can bear it alone."
He smiled faintly, dropping his hand.
"Pardon me," he replied, gently. "I did not intend to wound you. Miss West is coming. How long is she to stay here?"
"Until September," Amy answered, glancing at the couple coming up the walk. "She will return home, then, to prepare for her marriage with Mr. Glover. It is no secret; therefore I speak freely."
She looked up at him as she concluded, and was startled at the expression of his face. It was very grave and stern, and with a hasty bow to her, he left the room. A suspicion, for the first time, entered her mind—could it be that Dr. Armitage loved Vida? Well, it did not matter to her, since he cared nothing for herself. Vida's clear, merry tones roused her from the reverie into which she had fallen.
"Dreaming, Amy? And Dr. Armitage looked dreadfully solemn—what is the matter? What a splendid man the doctor is! Such a man as he it would be worth something to conquer. I've half a mind to attempt it, Mr. Glover notwithstanding."
"For shame, Vida!" Amy's sweet, indignant voice rung out, clearly. "No true woman would trifle with any man's best feelings, least of all those of a man like Roslyn Armitage."
A low laugh rippled from Vida's lips.
"You are earnest, Amy, but never fear! Even thoughtless I would never stain my hands with such work as that. And now, look at these flowers I have brought you!"
Poor Amy! The flowers had few charms for her at that moment, overburdened as she was, physically and mentally. But she possessed a strong nature, and after the first shock she took up her burden, bravely as she might, patiently as she must, and bore it without complaint.
How long the sultry summer days were! how tediously their slow length was drag-

pities me, knowing my utter loneliness, pities me, and I—as if I could accept that!" Poor Amy! She had yet to learn to what desperation a weak and suffering woman might be driven—yet to learn that in the hour of sore trial a human soul might desert its first principles.

It was a gray, cheerless day in late November. Outside, the wailing winds tossed the bare branches, and drifted the dead leaves; indoors, there was a bright, glowing fire, before which sat Amy Livingston, with clasped hands and scarlet cheeks, listening, as she had been forced to do for a half hour, to her sister-in-law's fretful, complaining voice.

"Dear knows what's to become of us," she was saying; "your brother don't get along with his business very well of late, and since that scamp of a lawyer lost all your property speculating, and we've had you to wholly support, it makes considerable difference!"

Amy moved uneasily—how often in the past two months she had heard such words, and how sharply they had hurt her! She realized fully what it was to eat the bread of dependence, bitter enough always, but doubly so in her present situation.

"There's Dr. Armitage," said Mrs. Livingston, glancing from the window. "He comes often of late."

"Will you open the window? It is very warm," was Amy's answer.

"The window? Yes, but you'll want it shut again in a minute. It is run, run, all the time!"

Another wordy arrow, sharp as a two-edged sword. Amy winced painfully, and Dr. Armitage, entering at that moment, saw that her eyes were full of tears. Seeing in his face something of the sympathy he felt for her, a sudden, wild thought struck her. Was it not possible that he cared something for her? Hardly; and yet, he loved no one else she was sure, and—perhaps, he might one day care for her. She was in no condition to reason clearly—a wild idea of escape

and I am coming back to West Fernleigh to spend the winter."

"Coming back—mistaken in thinking that she loved him!"—the old fear rose up in Amy's heart with hundredfold strength. Her head throbbed painfully, she leaned more heavily on the doctor's supporting arm; there was a chaotic whirl of surrounding objects—and then she quietly fainted. When she recovered consciousness she was lying on the sofa in her husband's library, and he himself was bending over her. He held a glass of medicine to her lips, which she drank without question.

"Now," he said, smiling, as he arranged the pillows for her, "I shall leave you to rest awhile. You are tired."
He would have kissed her, but she put up her hands, with a swift, involuntary cry: "No, no!"

A great shadow was on her face, and she saw it reflected in his, as he went slowly out of the room. She lay for a time, staring blankly at the red rays of the setting sun on the wall opposite, thinking of the step she had taken—or trying to think, for a drowsiness was stealing over her that soon overcame her, and she slept.

When she awoke, the day was done, and the room was filled with dusky shadows. With awakening came a clear remembrance of her position—all; and she realized fully now how wild had been the desperation that drove her to it. A wife, loving with an intensity that only a nature like hers could know, and unloved—a great sob came swelling up from her anguish, that shook her slender form like a reed.

"Amy, little wife, what is it? Let me comfort you."

Her husband's voice—he was kneeling beside her with one arm about her. She started up, turning to him a face whose whiteness the shadows hid.
"Comfort!" she repeated, bitterly. "Oh, Roslyn, why did you marry me, loving Vida?"

It was a wild cry, forced out from her pain, but it was a revelation to Dr. Armitage. A light leaped to his eyes—he put his arms about her, his face to hers.
"Amy, was it that? Oh, my darling, did you not know that it's you I love—my darling, my darling?"

He held her close to his heart, showering hot kisses on cheek and lip, and brow, and Amy knew at last that the love she longed for was hers, that her husband was hers, as she was his, forever.

And in the sunshine of the new life that was henceforth hers, the cruel chains of disease fell from her, and she stands to-day before her noble husband, wearing a holier crown than ever decked the brow of monarchs—the crown of a perfect and required love.

A Flash of Lightning.

BY ELEN E. REXFORD.

"What a strange girl Miss Wayne is! Don't you think so?"

Miss Casilear asked the question of Hoyt Graham one morning, when they were standing on the steps together. Cecile Wayne was tying up pink carnations in one of the beds down the path.

"I think her a very charming girl," answered Graham, looking down the path. "She seems quite different from most young women I know."

"How, may I ask?" said Miss Casilear. "In what does the difference consist?"

"She seems wholly truthful," answered Graham. "I see no artificiality about her. She is frank, and never flatters."

"She is frank," answered Miss Casilear. "But, for all that, I think there is something about her that neither you nor I can understand."

"I wish you would tell me what you mean," he said, earnestly.

"I can not, now," was her reply. "Miss Wayne is coming."

Cecile Wayne came up the path and joined them. She had a sweet, true face, with clear, frank eyes, and a look of artlessness in her features that was not merely superficial, Hoyt Graham felt sure.

Presently Miss Casilear left them and Hoyt Graham and Cecile Wayne sat and talked together for an hour or two about many pleasant things. Those quiet talks of theirs were very happy ones. In them they learned the new, sweet lesson of loving the old, old lesson—yet so new—so sweet.

One day, not long after that, Hoyt Graham asked Cecile Wayne to be his wife and she consented, with a happy smile lighting up her sweet, fair face, and he felt that he had won a true and faithful woman.

"I wonder if Beechwood is haunted?" asked Miss Casilear, one morning at the breakfast table.

"I never heard of any such thing," replied Mr. Wayne.

"What made you ask such a question?" asked Miss Casilear. "Have you been seeing ghosts, Miss Casilear?"

"I don't know," answered Miss Casilear. "I saw something that marvelously resembled a ghost last night, near that old clump of trees in the corner of the lawn. Do you know what it was, Miss Wayne? Was it a ghost or not?"

"I don't know," answered Miss Wayne, without looking up. Hoyt Graham saw that she was pale.

"Tell us what you saw," said Mr. Wayne.

"It might have been imagination," answered Miss Casilear. "I'm afraid I'm getting nervous."

What could Miss Casilear mean? Graham asked himself. He had seen the peculiar look she gave Miss Wayne when she asked her the question, and he had noticed how pale Miss Wayne was. There was evidently something at the bottom of it that he did not understand.

One day he and Cecile were in the parlor reading Tennyson. He read that little song of Vivian to Merlin:

"In love, if love be love, if love be ours,
Faith and unfaith can ne'er be ours;
Unfaith in aught, is want of faith in all."
"It is the little rift within the lute
That by and by will make the music mute,
And ever widening, slowly silence all."
"The little rift within the lute's late,
Or little pitted speck in garnered fruit
That, rotting inward, slowly molders all."
"It is not worth the keeping. Let it go.
But shall it? Answer, darling, answer no.
And trust me all in all, or not at all."

He laid the book down and there was a little thoughtful silence between them, which by and by he broke.

"I think there is a world of truth in that little rhyme. We can trust so long as we have no distrust, but the moment dis-

trust creeps in, all trust is gone. It must be perfect trust, or no trust at all. 'Unfaith in aught is want of faith in all.'"
"You may trust me," she said, with a half-shy earnestness. "You believe that, don't you?"

"How could I believe otherwise?" he answered, kissing her.

"I do believe this place is haunted," said Miss Casilear, the next morning. "I saw another ghost last night. Did you see any thing, Miss Wayne? I heard you stirring in your room afterward, and I thought, perhaps, you might have been up at the time, and possibly have seen the specter, or whatever it was."

"I saw nothing," answered Cecile.

Hoyt Graham, watching her, saw how pale she had grown. He saw, too, the scornful, unbelieving look in Miss Casilear's eyes. What could it mean?

"It must be that the place is haunted," said Miss Casilear. "I saw a white figure go down the avenue, and another figure, or ghost, whatever you choose to call it, met it there. I don't think it was imagination. I have seen it three times now." She kept her eyes on Cecile's face. Cecile never once looked up.

"I wish you would tell me what you mean by your ghost stories," Graham said, after breakfast, when he and Miss Casilear were alone.

"What would you think of a woman, who, engaged to one man, kept stolen interviews with another?" she said, a world of meaning in her tone.

"What do you mean?" he said.

"Watch and see," she answered, and left him.

The night settled down dark and rainy. Now and then the lightning flashed vividly across the heavens, and terrible peals of thunder shook the house. The guests seemed in no mood for conversation, and went to their rooms at an early hour.

Hoyt Graham sat down by his window and looked out into the night.

Suddenly, as a flash of lightning made every thing light as day, he started, for there, gliding down the avenue, was a ghostly figure.

He peered out into the darkness, and waited for another flash.

Pretty soon it came, and by its light he saw, down by the group of trees at the end of the lawn, not one figure, but two. A man and a woman, and the man's arms were around the woman's form; and, as the lightning lit the landscape with a fierce white light, he saw that the woman was Cecile Wayne.

He staggered as if a shaft of lightning had struck him. He had counted her so true, and she was false! He knew, now, what Miss Casilear meant. Suddenly a line of the song he had read rung through his brain:

"Unfaith in aught is want of faith in all."

Going down the hall the next morning, Cecile Wayne met Hoyt Graham, with a traveling shawl on his arm.

"I am going away," he said, in answer to her questioning look. "I hoped I should not see you. I have left a letter for you. Of course, after what I saw last night, there can be nothing more between us."

She staggered, pale as death.

"Let me explain," she said.

"No, don't trouble yourself to," he said, coldly. "Good-morning."

"Oh, Hoyt, Hoyt!" she cried, "let me tell you the truth," but the man never turned, but went on down the path, stern and pitiless. He had no pity for the woman whom he believed to be false.

Years after, Hoyt Graham stopped at a little rude log-cabin on a western prairie, and asked shelter for the night. A man was the only occupant of the place.

"You can stay," he said, and Graham sat down beside the door to watch the sunset. Suddenly his eyes fell on a grave, with a white board at its head, bearing an inscription. He went up to it and read:

"CECILE WAYNE, AGED 22."

He turned toward the cabin door. The man was standing there, watching him.

"I knew a woman named Cecile Wayne, once," Graham said, and his face was pale with old memories of the woman he had never succeeded in forgetting. "I wonder if this can be her grave."

"It is my sister's grave," the man answered. "She died of a broken heart. I was a wild, reckless fellow in my youth, and my father turned me out of doors, and threatened to send any one of the family after me who ventured to have anything to say to me. He was a hard, stern, unloving man. My sister managed to see me once in a while, in spite of my father's threats. At last I took it into my head to come west, and she tried to help me. It seems that the man she was engaged to saw her meet me one night, and believed her false to him. He went away, refusing to hear any explanation of her conduct. My father found out, by some means, that she had been trying to help me, and bade her leave his house. She came to me, and we came here. She lived about a year, and then died like a broken flower."

"My God! I believed her false, when all the time she was true to me!" cried Hoyt Graham. "Oh, Cecile, forgive me!" and the strong man threw himself in the weakness of his passionate sorrow, by the grave of the woman he had misjudged so cruelly. And all night long he lay there, asking her who slept beneath the grasses to forgive the wrong he had done her. Perhaps she did. Who knows?

Beat Time's Notes.

WE are so eminently respectable at our house that we burn no wood in the stove unless it is nicely planned down and varnished, with our monogram on each stick. Our matches are not of plebeian pine but of fine lignum vitae. Our towels are of the finest merino, not common linen, and the soap is nicely glycerine; we use rose-water for cooking purposes; every fly about the house is compelled to have our coat of arms on its back, clean their teeth and pare their nails twice a day. There is nothing like being nice and particular about these things.

With what sublime resignation are we enabled to sit in church, with all worldly things off our minds, when we are conscious we are better dressed, and are looked at more than anybody else there!

FORTUNE follows the brave—but I have found by experience that Fortune is not feet-footed for it seldom catches up with me.

BEAT TIME.



ALL ALONE.